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THE

BIBLE RECORD OF CREATION

TRUE FOR EVERY AGE

(THE)

BIBLE RECORD OF CREATION TRUE FOR EVERY AGE.

Bible. O. T. Genesis I - III. English.
" _{BY}

P. W. GRANT.

London:

(HODDER AND STOUGHTON,
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P R E F A C E.

AS indicated by its title, the chief aim of the following work is to interpret the opening chapter of the Book of Genesis on a principle, which appears correct in itself, and according to which not only the main scientific objections which have been more recently urged with increasing confidence, but also all objections of a purely scientific nature, may be most simply and satisfactorily met. The close connection between the first three chapters, together with their important bearing on the whole Volume of Inspiration, finally led to a considerable extension of the work. The unsettled state of the argument pertaining to the original condition and antiquity of the race renders it impossible as yet to deal fully with what will appear to many the greatest difficulty connected with the interpretation of the second and third chapters.

INVERAVEN BANK,

Perth, July 2, 1877.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION	PAGE 1
------------------------	-----------

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST SECTION NON-SCIENTIFIC BUT TRUE.—ITS STRUCTURE AND GENERAL INTERPRETATION	19
--	----

CHAPTER II.

EXPOSITION OF THE FIRST SECTION	87
---	----

CHAPTER III.

UNITY AND HARMONY OF THE FIRST AND SECOND SECTIONS OF THE NARRATIVE	187
--	-----

CHAPTER IV.

EXPOSITION OF THE SECOND SECTION	223
--	-----

CHAPTER V.

THE RIVERS OF EDEN	297
------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER VI.

EXPOSITION OF THE THIRD SECTION	333
---	-----

INTRODUCTION.



Introduction.

I.

1. The last fifty years have witnessed a progress in every department of human thought and work unequalled by that of any like period in the history of the world. This is emphatically true of physical science on the one side and of Christianity on the other. For a time these seemed to approach and to become peculiarly friendly. More recently, it must be confessed, appearances at least of an irreconcilable antagonism have arisen. Never before did science come forth in such terrible array, in the persons of her most devoted, most eminent, and most highly respected cultivators, to do deadly battle against almost all the most profoundly cherished and most highly valued beliefs of Christendom. We do not wonder that the faith of not a few should falter. An era of special difficulty has doubtless arrived. Yet it is just as true, that the religion of the Bible never displayed more of the freshness and power of her "mighty youth," or seemed to exert a purer, nobler, richer influence, or more likely to secure the universal and most willing homage of mankind.

2. Let us never doubt the ultimate result of any conflict between two beneficent powers whose progress has never yet been permanently checked, and whose constant and free co-operation is so absolutely essential to the full-orbed development of manhood and to the calm and undisturbed enjoyment of happiness. Powers thus friendly to man cannot possibly be really and permanently, or more than for a time apparently, hostile to one another. Let not the friends of both cease to be friendly. Let them become "friends in council," as well as in conflict. Before harmony can be finally established, the ideas

of both must be very considerably modified. We may as well attempt to stay the course of the sun in his ascent from the horizon to the zenith as think of preventing either the full evolution of physical truth or the final conquest of the world by Jesus Christ. Scientific speculation may be changed ; Bible interpretation may advance ; errors on both sides may pass away ; simpler and more correct views of scientific and spiritual truth will ever tend toward perfect harmony.

3. Admitting the mighty practical value of the knowledge of God, of the moral nature of man, and of a future state of existence, there never was a time in which we had so clear a demonstration of the necessity of a Divine revelation. However ministrant to the intellectual expansion and material well-being of mankind, the wonderful progress of physical science, instead of superseding the Bible by the discovery of previously unknown or imperfectly apprehended truth, whether concerning God or with respect to man, has, as a matter of fact, explain it as we may, issued in leading a growing number of our most prominent men, our most advanced thinkers, freely to confess their utter inability to prove even the existence of a personal God, the fact of human responsibility, or the reality of a future world. They may acknowledge the existence of a religious nature on the part of man, but they can find no certainty in the case of religious truth ; and, if they would yield to the secret impulses of that nature, and seek to render some open act of worship, they must follow the example of their Athenian predecessors, and erect an altar with the inscription,—“To the Unknown God.”

4. But this is not all. The very nature of scientific pursuit would seem to lead to the same conclusion as to the need and value of a Divine revelation. The most elementary knowledge of physical truth is sufficient to lead the mind to place Divine agency at a greater distance from the sphere in which it was before believed directly to act. Secondary causa-

tion seems to rise to new importance and power. Physical law begins, as if visibly, to reign. Providence assumes a more general or less special character. Thus God appears sensibly to withdraw. This mental effect seems to deepen and to increase with advancing knowledge and persistent study. As the authors of "The Unseen Universe" remark: "It may sound strange to some of our readers to be told that it is the duty of the man of science to push back this great First Cause in time as far as possible ; nevertheless, this accurately represents the part in the universe which he is called upon to play." We trust this gives expression to one of those important facts, which are of severe and threatening aspect simply because, whilst indicating but a half, they are set forth as representing the whole truth. We trust the enlightened authors referred to will not find fault if their words are thus far modified : "It is the first duty of the man of science to remove backwards the agency of the great First Cause ; but, after the streams of causation have been duly traced backwards, it is his next duty to retrace their downward flow, to mark how they commingle, to discover the countless beneficent and needful results of their united agency, and thus to bring back the great Agent, and demonstrate His universal presence as being, in the words of Scripture, "in all, through all, and over all." Still the first duty we fully recognise. The difficulty attending the second need not be disguised. Hence the necessity of a Divine revelation, if the faith which is the root of all pure and lofty character and the foundation of all glorious and immortal hope would abide, and if the study of science and philosophy would be pursued at once with the freedom and enthusiasm which it justly demands, and without loss or danger to that inestimable spiritual belief to which otherwise it thus appears to be to no small extent antagonistic.

5. This, it may be replied, is all very well, provided we really had such a revelation, or provided that which professes to be

such were perfectly accordant with the indubitable conclusions of scientific investigation ; whilst, however valuable the truths scattered over the pages of the Bible, we find many statements, such as those of the opening chapters of Genesis, which both theologians and men of science have been long and vainly endeavouring to reconcile with these conclusions, and which thus show that the Book which contains them can have no sufficient claim to Divine authority. Against this many would of course simply argue, that the Bible was intended to reveal Divine or spiritual, not physical or scientific truth, that we are to be content with the knowledge of its general spirit and scope, and therefore that, even though the presence of physical error could be detected, no proof could thus be established of the absence of an all-sufficient inspiration. We cannot here deal with the question thus suggested. We think, however, the wiser course to be that of doing all that can be done to indicate the harmony of the statements referred to, rightly interpreted, with the real findings of science. Let us not hastily conclude that past endeavours preclude all reasonable hope of future success. We should not forget that efforts equally vigorous and long continued have been put forth, as yet with no full or final success, to bring under a law of unity and harmony certain departments of human knowledge. Such reduction is really the last work of the scientific and philosophic mind. As the various realms of truth are separately and successively explored, they are only gradually found to coalesce and to form one grand territory. For ages a border warfare may be maintained, and final agreement may seem impossible.

6. To take an example from two contiguous regions : how often and how long has it appeared utterly hopeless to discover or to show the harmony between the truths of physiology and those of psychology ! Do men despair of a final reconciliation ? They know that body and soul constitute the one being, man, and therefore are assured that the truths as to the one must

consist with the truths relating to the other, and that these must combine to form the one science or the one philosophy of human nature. Let us not admit this, and yet doubt the possibility of the like discovery of the harmony of natural and revealed truth, and that on the mere ground that harmony has not yet been established. Let the patience accorded in the one case not be refused in the other.

7. We may venture to affirm that, so far as the first chapter of Genesis is concerned, impatience and despondency would be utterly out of place. Whatever difficulties may, in the present state of science, continue to attach to the second and third chapters, we feel assured that right interpretation is alone required to remove all such difficulties from it, and that the sacred author has been enabled to realize the grand intended design, not by anticipating the discoveries of science, but by withholding all admixture of early scientific error.

II.

1. We may now go on to say, that it seems impossible to overestimate the value of the three opening chapters of the Book of Genesis. They form a distinct portion of the sacred volume; assuming the Divine origin of the Bible, they may be fitly described as *The Inspired Introduction to the Inspired History of Redemption*. That history may be said to begin at the close of the third chapter of Genesis, and to end with the last chapter of the book of Revelation.

2. The Bible has been well regarded as one organic whole; and we may truly say that without this introductory narrative the entire subsequent history would be without a key and without appropriate meaning. Yet, we may justly assume that the author, especially if uninspired, could not have conceived that he was writing, not so much a suitable beginning for his own literary production, say, for this book of Genesis, or for the

whole Pentateuch as, what we have said, a fit introduction for that entire volume of revelation, which was to be written by so many human hands and through the course of so many successive ages. As well in respect to size or length as in point of form and matter, this remarkable production is in perfect keeping with its plan and design. In its brevity there is wonderful beauty. It fits the whole book of which it forms so essential a part, as does one of the most important members the perfectly constituted body of man. Even if previously acquainted with the complete revelation to be found only in the New Testament, the sacred author could not possibly have provided a more appropriate introduction. The idea of redemption pre-supposes that of moral and spiritual ruin, which again pre-supposes that of original created perfection and righteousness. To this portion of Scripture, accordingly, we find frequent allusion in the writings of the Old Testament ; but not till we study those of the New can we form any adequate conception of its grandeur and truth.

3. We may safely affirm that, in one way or another, expressly or by implication, almost every doctrine of revelation may be traced in these opening pages of the sacred writer. They may be said, at least, to be thickly sown with the seeds of future things, the things of both God and man. The One God, here revealed as creator and redeemer, appears as the same God throughout the whole volume of Scripture. As here indicated, only one human race is spoken of in the Bible. The original Divine image and the original personal righteousness in which the first human pair were created are never after lost sight of. The first paradisaic home of the race becomes the fit and the delightful type of the final home of the redeemed. That Divine likeness which sin destroyed is yet to be perfectly restored, and the sin which destroyed it to be fully and for ever removed. Adam, the first and natural head of the human family, introducing sin and misery, became, by contrast, the type of

the second Adam, the head of the redeemed family of God, introducing righteousness and blessedness and glory. Nay, even here, and for the first time, the veil is partially withdrawn from the angelic world, and we are taught concerning the existence of moral evil as well as moral good before the creation of our race,—of a fall before the fall of man. All Scripture would seem but an evolution of this wonderful introductory part. Thus, we may say, that part has the closest and most important relation to all time, nay, to all eternity. This will appear as we study it in detail. If so, we need hardly draw the inference which cannot fail to occur in every mind, that, thus written so early, and we may say so prophetically as well as truthfully, assuredly “this is the finger of God.”

4. We need hardly say, that this proceeds on the assumption of the perfect harmony between this part of the Bible and the really verified conclusions of science. After so long a conflict,—a conflict too often fierce, and not, as it ought to have been, ever friendly,—such an assumption may appear, even to many a devoted student of Scripture, thoroughly groundless. We are persuaded, however, that the assumption, instead of being extravagant or erroneous, will yet be found in full keeping with fact. To perceive the truth of this, we must not only know what these conclusions are, but also apprehend what the sacred record really means. All truth is one: all its parts are perfectly consistent. Still, many of them may seem, and that for ages, to be utterly discordant. Put the rod in the clear stream, and it certainly appears bent; draw it out, and it is as certainly straight. Truth is seen through many a refracting medium. The imperfectly apprehended truth of Scripture refracts the real truth of nature; and the imperfectly apprehended truth of nature refracts the real truth of Scripture. When the real truth of both is perfectly apprehended all shall appear, as it is, perfectly straight, perfectly coincident, or at least perfectly harmonious. What we need is a faultless achromatic lens, not

made with hands, a purged eye, though which truth may be seen alike free from all unnatural distortion and from all fallacious colouring.

5. It is not uncommon to call scripture Divine and science human, and thus to contrast the former as infallible with the latter as erring. The contrast is mistaken and injurious. In fact, Scripture and science ought to be neither contrasted nor compared. When we speak of Scripture, we are apt to forget that we really or practically mean our own interpretation of Scripture. The true subjects of comparison or contrast are Scripture and nature, on the one hand, and the interpretation of Scripture and the interpretation of nature, on the other. Keeping this in view, we may call the two latter alike human, and the two former alike Divine. In this way, as has been often done, we shall regard these as two volumes of one Divine revelation, containing two distinct yet interblending and harmonious systems of truth, two inestimable gifts of the One ever blessed God; of which the one ought never to be magnified to the disadvantage of the other, whilst the full and appropriate use of both is absolutely essential to the highest well-being of man. Of these volumes man is the Divinely appointed interpreter. The facts of both it is his part to investigate, and thence to rise to the inference of just conclusions and the conception of more and more general and enlarged ideas. As Bacon has finely said, "*Homo interpretes naturæ*," we may alike justly say, *Homo interpretes scripturæ*.

6. Let us then assume the Divine origin of nature and Scripture, and the human origin of the interpretation of both. Let us assume the perfection and harmony of the former, and make all needful allowance for the imperfection and possible discordance of the latter. At the same time, let us not regard the interpretation of either as exclusively human or as always to be distrusted. No; in the work assigned him; and in the use of the faculties with which he has been endowed, man is not

to be contemplated as absolutely independent, nor is he to be viewed as left without the aid and inspiration of Him who, after all, must be regarded as the real and sole interpreter as well of His own works as of His own word, and as using the minds of men, gradually, and notwithstanding innumerable errors, to unfold His own true meaning, and thus, ultimately, and after many ages of conflict as well as of co-operation, to rear two grand and consistent systems of natural and spiritual truth, ever to be distinguished, yet never to be separated, because in reality forming one and the same majestic whole, the perfect mind of the one all creating and all revealing God.

7. It may, indeed, be said, that in the origination of Scripture must be recognised a human element not to be acknowledged as a factor in the origination of the world ; and therefore, that Divine perfection ought to be attributed rather to the latter than to the former. To this it may be replied, that, whatever our view of the extent of inspiration, we cannot fairly deny at least the possibility of the Divine prevention of human error in the writing of the sacred volume, or of that volume being free from all real error ; whilst, again, it cannot be justly maintained, that the course of nature, especially with respect to mankind and the habitable globe, or with respect to all that mainly concerns us, has not been very greatly affected by this very element, by, in fact, the free moral agency of man. How immensely, indeed, the condition of this world has been affected, and must continue ceaselessly to be so, physically and economically, morally and socially, nay, in every way, by this agency it is simply impossible adequately to conceive, far less accurately to determine. Making every allowance for the effect of the element in question, or taking the lowest view of inspiration consistent with the idea of the Bible containing a veritable revelation, we have yet a book conveying a true and trustworthy revelation of the God of redemption, together with all that is needful or essential to the spiritual and eternal well-being of

man. Not only so, but in this book alone can we find the real and only key to the actual condition of the world to which we have referred, involving, as it does, an order sufficient to reveal the presence and the wisdom of the God of creation, and yet such disorder as may well suffice to prove as well the reality and potency of the human will as the truth and terribleness of the unmodified scripture doctrine of sin.

8. This must be carefully kept in view, if we would escape the error which underlies very much of the speculation of the present day. Whatever directly or indirectly involves the denial of moral agency on the one hand, and of supernatural agency on the other, call it science, philosophy, or mere speculation, it were utterly vain to attempt to reconcile with the leading facts and central doctrines of Scripture, whose grand design is to reveal a Divine salvation from human sin, to treat, in fact, of the moral and the supernatural from beginning to end. We need hardly add, that all such negation is inconsistent with the very idea of an ethical philosophy, or that it of necessity turns into "a baseless fabric of a vision" all that moral science which the most exalted minds, whether with or without the aid of Scripture, have been building up and perfecting in ancient and modern times.

The idea of a perfect natural order, really beyond the reach of any human or other disturbance, and held to be alone consistent with all proper conception of Divine power and perfection, is certainly specious and fitted to conciliate the religious sentiments of some. The great Creator seems exalted to the highest degree by what is deemed the sublime and enlightened belief that He created, or at least so arranged, the whole matter of which the universe is composed, that all has ever since advanced under the sway of unerring laws, from stage to stage of development, up to the present state of most wonderful and apparently perfect organisation, as it is destined to go on through indefinite ages, if not for ever, without the slightest need of Divine interference or amendment.

9. With respect to this theory, we may observe :—

Firstly. That the supernatural element, direct Divine agency, is admitted to have had a real and important place in the initial part of the creative work. This and more is implied, for instance, in the view taken by Mr. Darwin of the primordial introduction of life. The total exclusion of such agency would, of course, be at variance with every narrative, correct or incorrect, of a Divine creation.

Secondly. It were out of place to treat here of the merits of this or any other theory. We would only remark, that it does seem extravagant to assume so much as the possibility, and greatly more so the fact, of such a primary distribution of elementary matter as, under the exclusive agency of the natural laws, would necessarily and finally issue in the evolution of the great cosmos, including the very highest forms of life. The marvellous fact of perpetual progress, on so vast a scale and through so measureless a period, does seem infallibly to imply the universal presence and constant agency of mind.

Thirdly. Waiving, however, all difficulty involved in the assumption referred to, waiving also the apparent contradiction implied in the supposed evolution of a being morally free from a succession of beings totally destitute of a free moral nature, we cannot admit the subsequent competency of unaided natural law to maintain or to continue to unfold the perfect order which it is held to have produced. The introduction of a veritably will-endowed being, such as man is usually conceived to be, and such as he is certainly regarded in Scripture, would of necessity endanger the stability and normal development of the order supposed, and might to no small extent prove subversive of it. Hence the simple alternative, either the insufficiency of the natural laws, however perfect in themselves, must be admitted, or the existence of a free will, of a free moral nature in man must be denied.

This is fully acknowledged. Thus, in treating of the will, Mr. H. Spencer remarks :—“To reduce the general question

to its simplest form : psychical changes either conform to law or they do not. If they do not conform to law, this work, in common with all works on the subject, is sheer nonsense ; no science of psychology is possible. If they do conform to law, there cannot be any such thing as free will. I will only further say, that freedom of the will, did it exist, would be at variance with the beneficent necessity displayed in the evolution of the correspondence between the organism and its environment. The gradual moulding of inner relations to outer relations, which has been delineated in the foregoing pages, that ever-extending adaptation of the cohesions of psychical states to the connections between the answering phenomena, which we have seen results from the accumulation of experiences, would be hindered did there exist anything which otherwise caused their cohesions. As it is, we see that the continuous adjustment of the vital activities to activities in the environment must become more accurate and exhaustive. The life must become higher, and the happiness greater ; must do so, because the inner relations are determined by the outer relations. But were the inner relations partly determined by some other agency, the harmony at any moment existing would be disturbed, and the advance to a higher harmony impeded. There would be a retardation of that grand progress which is bearing humanity onwards to a higher intelligence and a nobler character."

We quote this at length, not to indicate any peculiar doctrine, but simply to illustrate the incompatibility of the idea of free will with the theory in question.

Fourthly. But if that theory involves the denial of free will, and therefore of the moral nature of man, nay, of his personality properly so-called, it thus at the same time involves the denial of, not only the fact, but also the possibility of sin, of any kind or degree, on the part of man. Thus far, as already said, it is irreconcilably at variance with Scripture. Not only so, but, in order that the evils incident to the free moral agency referred to may be prevented or removed, and that man may

be delivered from the power of sin on the one hand, and carried, we think, along a surer path "to a higher intelligence and a nobler character" than that to which Mr. Spencer alludes on the other, we must suppose the agency of a Power higher than that of any "beneficent necessity displayed" in the operations of the mere natural laws,—we must suppose, in fact, the agency of that great redemptive Power, whose manifold operations and self-revealings it is a main part of Scripture to record. Of course, if man had always used his moral freedom to make the proper choice or to obey the laws of his higher nature, the Divinely created order would have continued unimpaired, or rather, an ever-improving condition of things might have been secured. As a matter of fact, however, the sacred narrative sets forth the abuse of liberty and the disorder which has ensued. Then follows the history of the grand remedial system, at work indeed within the sphere of nature and using the forces of nature, yet involving, throughout its whole course of operation, an agency essentially supernatural. It were vain, then, to attempt to reconcile any theory of human progress by which all such agency is set aside with the Bible narrative of redemption. For the very same reason, we cannot but deem it utterly hopeless, as it is far from desirable, to attempt to eliminate, by any fair interpretation, the supernatural element from the sacred page itself. For many a physical ailment, we may safely trust to the *vis medicatrix naturæ*; but within the whole realm of nature there is no power to which we can look for escape from sin and death, or for the perfection of our moral nature on the one hand, and for the enjoyment of a perfect and eternal order of things on the other; so that we may justly say, that, only by being a narrative of the supernatural, could the Bible be a suitable or a true history of redemption.

Fifthly. We may add one remark more: however sublime the idea of God so arranging once for all the primary matter of the universe, that, under the natural laws, the perfect

cosmos should ultimately be evolved, we cannot but regard such an idea as coming infinitely short of that of the God, not of this text or of that, but of the whole teachings of Scripture. Be the former ever so sublime, it is fearfully cold, if not positively repulsive. A Creator, like Brahma, the first of the Hindoo trinity, whose whole work is conceived to have been finished millions of years ago, can, we suspect, be neither loved nor feared, and, like the same divinity, is sure to have but few worshippers. A wonderful artist, though of infinite power and skill, showing no present or practical interest in his own work, cannot long or by many be regarded as the Author of the great universe.

How infinitely different the God of the Bible! How near to all the works of His own hands! How incomprehensible in goodness and love, as in wisdom and power! How sacred and cheering His paternal relationship and character! How worthy of confidence and love! How actually trusted and loved! How justly may it be affirmed, that the God of every other book, scientific, philosophical, or religious, if different, is inferior in proportion to the difference!

10. So much for what we think it impossible to reconcile with Scripture. We have referred especially, almost exclusively, to what involves the denial of the moral or of the supernatural. We have alluded to nothing which has been accepted in the scientific or philosophical world at large as certain or indisputable truth. With all such truth, we may be assured, the sacred volume, rightly interpreted, will be found to agree. No evil has sprung from the enlightened conviction of the kindred nature, mutual helpfulness, and common worth of the sister sciences of Scripture and nature. They are co-heiresses of two distinct, but inseparable, portions of one and the same incalculably rich paternal estate, which cannot be wisely used or fully enjoyed apart from one another. Just as inheritance has often led to family misunderstanding

and family feud, this Divine estate has led, through errors and misconceptions, to mutual distrust and unseemly contention. Still, as error after error has been detected, and as the two precious portions have been found complementary and inseparable on the one hand, and of common use and advantage on the other, these offensive disputes have been hushed, a kindred spirit has been evoked, all concerned have worked in harmony, and multitudes have richly enjoyed the fruits of the one common property.

11. All this we might go on to illustrate. However, we trust some slight illustration will be found in the following pages, in which we endeavour to show that the Bible story of creation is so constructed as to suit the case of mankind in all ages, not because it contains so great an amount of exact scientific information, but because it so wisely abstains from all such revelation as would anticipate the future discovery of scientific truth, and thus interfere with the proper and Divinely appointed work of man.

12. We may here conclude as we began, by remarking that we regard these three opening chapters of Genesis as of highest importance, and as standing in special relationship to all subsequent Scripture. Viewed in this light, they may, we have said, be well named, *The Inspired Introduction to the Inspired History of Redemption*. We would only add, that they naturally divide themselves into two parts or sections,—the one comprising the whole of the first chapter, with the first three verses of the second; the other beginning with the fourth verse of the second chapter and running on to the end of the third,—the former being a general account of universal creation; the latter, a more detailed narration of primitive man. Still, as this latter very naturally divides itself into two distinct and important parts, and also for the sake of convenience, we think it better to treat the whole under three separate

sections: the first, as just said, relating to universal creation; the second, to the creation and instruction of Adam and Eve; and the third, to the temptation and fall along with the promise of redemption.

Chapter I.

THE FIRST SECTION NON-SCIENTIFIC

BUT TRUE.

ITS STRUCTURE AND GENERAL

INTERPRETATION.



Chapter I.

THE FIRST SECTION NON-SCIENTIFIC BUT TRUE.— ITS STRUCTURE AND GENERAL INTERPRETATION.

I.

1. For many generations this ancient record of universal creation has been alike admired as unapproachably sublime, and accepted as infallibly true. Even in the judgment of many who now doubt no early cosmogony can be compared with it. For a time the faith of not a few in its Divine authority was very materially shaken by the establishment of the Copernican system of astronomy. However, as men became familiar with the central principle of that system, and with the enlarged views of the universe which were thus introduced, fears and doubts yielded to renewed and more enlightened confidence and faith. We need hardly say that, with the rise and progress of the still more modern science of geology, such doubts and fears have again and again seized the minds of the believing, and led the more sceptical to regard, if not to assail, the sacred narrative as inconsistent with the most certain conclusions of science, and thus as demonstrably untrue.

2. Somewhat numerous, accordingly, and various have been the more recent methods of interpretation. An immense amount of research, learning, and genius has been expended in the work of harmonising Scripture, and especially this opening portion of it, with the fair and acknowledged deductions of science. By many this work is deemed fruitless and vain. Utter failure, they think, has been and ever must be the result. The diversity and inconsistency of the views which now obtain,

they account sufficient proof of this. So different, too, are most of these views from those which were for many ages entertained, that some would go so far as even to doubt the honesty of the harmonist, who, as they fancy, must have some consciousness of perverting the words of Genesis, when seeking to show their consistency with the recently demonstrated facts of geology.

3. We are far, however, from suspecting or depreciating the endeavours referred to. It is not to be denied that the disclosures of modern science have involved the sincere and faithful interpretation of Scripture in what appears to very many inextricable difficulty. That any record of creation could possibly be written, suitable at once to the crude conceptions of early and to the scientific ideas of later times, seems so thoroughly unlikely, that we do not much wonder at their opinion. Still, we are persuaded that a true interpretation may be found, not certainly expressive of scientific knowledge or implying that the sacred writer was inspired to reveal a portion of the great system of physical truth, but yet proving that the first grand and precious announcements of Scripture are not only true in themselves, but also fitted to meet the progressive mind of every age to the end of time.

4. We cannot here do more than barely allude to a few of the theories of interpretation. As already indicated, many regard the narrative as not only uninspired, but utterly inconsistent with truth. The author may be acknowledged to have possessed real greatness of mind, and to have been very far in advance of his own age, still, the idea of now following him as a guide is to be reckoned absurd. Not a few, again, agreeing with these as regards the question of science, and yet believing in the general authority of Scripture, have been driven, as their only refuge, to seek shelter under the truth that the great end of the sacred volume is, not to impart physical knowledge, but to reveal true religion ;—that volume being thus viewed rather

as containing a Divine revelation than as being throughout infallibly and Divinely inspired. It has been said that the first chapter of Genesis may be poetry, but it cannot be science. More correctly may it be said, that it neither is, nor was intended to be, the one or the other. Further, it has been equally strongly held to be non-historical and yet inspired ; in fact, to be allegorical. It has been thought to set forth creation in plan and progress. Again, it has been viewed as a parable. Once more, we may add, it has been treated as the psalm of creation.

Nor let it be supposed that all this diversity of view practically demonstrates the purely human origin of the narrative, or its inconsistency with truth. In all ancient writings,—the Greek and Latin classics, for instance, as well as the sacred Scriptures,—there is many a passage which has given rise to as great a difference of opinion. In the earlier writings referred to, no less than in those of Paul, there are “things” confessedly “hard,” yet by no means impossible “to be understood.” Those who have studied most carefully, and who have very largely contributed of the wealth of their learning and genius to the elucidation of this vastly important portion of Scripture, if differing among themselves, and not yet arriving at fully certain and satisfactory conclusions, have been preparing the way for what may yet prove certain and satisfactory. We believe that the main error into which most of them have fallen is, that of treating the narrative too much in the light of an inspired treatise of geology. The very name by which it usually goes, “The Mosaic Cosmogony,” seems to imply as much, if it has not partially led to it. They would have taken a surer road to success, if they had treated it as at the same time almost, if not altogether, non-scientific, and yet perfectly and unexceptionably true. The theories of interpretation to which we now more particularly refer, though somewhat modified by different authors, are in point of number reducible to two ; and, it may be added, that as they have gained the suffrages of the great

majority of those who maintain the inspiration of the passage, there is, after all, no great reason for the unfavourable inference which has been drawn. We may briefly allude to the two theories referred to.

5. According to the first, the days of the record are regarded as literal or ordinary days of four and twenty hours. Between the Divine work indicated by the first verse and that of the creation of light, which is deemed the entire work of the first day, it is held, that the words of the second verse,—“And the earth was without form and void,” etc.,—most fairly admit of the supposition of a period of time, which may be extended to as great a length as the exigencies of scientific interpretation may demand, and during which all those vast and numerous physical operations which geology has disclosed as completed before the advent of man may have been carried on, though wisely passed over in Scripture, and left, as the proper domain of science, for the investigation of man. Nor can this view of the structure of the passage be justly held to have been pressed upon modern interpreters by the force of recent discovery; for a like view was taken of it long before the very birth of geology. The second verse is regarded as pointing to some tremendously destructive catastrophe, by which, immediately before the human era, the whole, according to some, and only a comparatively small portion, according to others, of the surface of the globe was rendered “waste and desolate,” the existing flora and fauna annihilated, and preparation made for the final work of fitting the world for mankind, and of creating the parents of the race, as described under the form of six literal days’ work of God. In this way the sacred record is held to treat of the earth exclusively in the light of the home of man, and to set forth simply those last, or, we may say, those finishing operations by which it was fitted for its purpose. We need add no further detail. The theory has been long and most ably supported by most eminent men of science, as well as by

the most learned theologians. In our more extended exposition, we may show that it may be pretty strongly assailed on critical grounds. Besides, the more recent advances of geology seem to leave no sufficient proof of a period of so great as the supposed desolation. Further, the sacred narrative as a whole appears clearly to imply that the entire creation of "heaven and earth," and no such partial work, was really intended; whilst we may add, that we cannot but deem such an interpretation is far too scientific to be truthlike, that is to say, it involves the revelation of an amount of physical truth not to be looked for in Scripture.

6. According to the second theory, the days of the record are viewed as periods of indefinite length. All the leading principles of geology are here fully admitted. The early appearance of animals as well as of plants is thus acknowledged, as also the difficulty thence arising to account for the fact that the whole vegetable kingdom is seemingly represented as completed long before the creation of either marine or land animals was begun. Another difficulty, too, in the view of very many absolutely insuperable, has to be met,—we mean that due to the fact, that the light is said to have been created on the first day, whilst the luminaries are said to have been formed on the fourth. By some, a grand panoramic view of creation is supposed to have been given to the sacred historian, not unlike certain of those visions of the future, which were afterwards granted to the prophets, and by means of which the successive scenes were made so to pass before the mind as to mark off the successive periods as corresponding to ordinary days with their evenings and mornings. The details of the vast work were not indicated. The earlier forms of animal life were not improperly passed over. The grand features of each successive era were alone brought to view. In all the kingdoms of nature, the periods of maximum development were selected as most suitable for the purpose of revelation. Thus,

though animal life had long before existed, on the third day the vegetable world was pictorially exhibited as being then of maximum luxuriance and magnificence. So, in the case of the fifth day, the age of mightiest reptiles was deemed worthy of like representation; whilst the sixth was similarly marked as the period of most magnificent mammals on the one hand, and of the advent of man on the other.

The difficulty connected with the late appearance of the heavenly bodies was deemed sufficiently well met by the supposition, that throughout the whole carboniferous era, that of most luxuriant vegetable growth, the warm and moist state of the atmosphere, whilst not preventive of the transmission of light, may have been sufficiently dense to conceal the real sources of light,—the sun, moon and stars, whose appearance in the panorama of creation was thus most properly reserved to the fourth day. This theory, most plausible in itself, and in many respects beautiful, has been developed and illustrated with great power and with no lack of ingenuity. The correspondence between the periods of maximum development and those represented by the parallel days of the record appears, to say the least, not a little remarkable. In the judgment of not a few, it may be said to be so very striking as to seem demonstrative at once of the correctness of the interpretation and of the inspiration of the sacred writer. Still, this theory has by no means yielded satisfaction even to minds disposed to accept it; nor has the progress of geology tended towards its further confirmation. We object to it somewhat more strongly than to the first, in so far as it supposes the revelation of a still greater amount of scientific truth. We object to it also on the ground, that whilst, as we have said, it does set forth certain remarkable coincidences, it fails at the same time to represent the creation of the existing world. Thus, in the third day the magnificent flora of a long buried world is really made to take the place of the vastly more highly organised forms,—the cereals for instance, and the fruit-trees,—at once of the sacred

record and of the existing world. The like might be added with respect to the two subsequent eras of reptilian and mammalian monsters; whilst the supposition of so measureless a period of solar and lunar obscuration as the theory implies cannot well be admitted as either likely in itself or supported by any known physical phenomena. We fully accept, however, the view taken of the creative days of the narrative. We may here add, that we feel immensely indebted to those who have developed, modified, upheld, and illustrated this as well as the last-mentioned theory. Their critical and scientific labours have assuredly done very much to prepare the way for some simpler and more satisfactory mode of interpretation.

II.

1. That there is some such method of interpretation, we now propose to endeavour at least to show. In the outset, it may be well to remark that we think interpreters have perhaps failed to study the peculiar structure of both sections of the narrative in the light of the general scope and style of the entire book of Genesis. Here we do not refer to any special peculiarities of the Hebrew language, but to what may be fully appreciated by the reader of our English version; and may say in passing, that all ironical allusions to the wonderful flexibility of that language as here apparently manifested in the variety of interpretations successively put upon the seemingly simple and express statements of the first chapter, may be very fairly set aside, as the real flexibility which does characterise various important clauses is due, not to the genius of the language, but to the generality and peculiarity of the clauses themselves. Whilst some have too freely assumed that the general meaning was understood, and that they had simply to discern in the details of geology the key to the special interpretation, others have, on a like assumption, drawn the inference that as modern science cannot possibly be made to agree with the terms of the record as now

understood, it is more than vain to attempt to interpret the terms of the record in keeping with modern science, and that, indeed, it is simply unmanly and beneath the dignity of criticism not to acknowledge the palpable discrepancy between them. With all due deference we venture to think otherwise, and to maintain that the real desideratum is that of the correct interpretation of the words of the narrative. We are persuaded that our English translation, however faithful and excellent as a whole, by what may seem a very insignificant oversight, in recent translations generally rectified, has tended to conceal the real scope and meaning of the author.

2. To this we shall return in due course. In the meantime we may do well to allude to a few things, which we might assume as true, but the careful consideration of which may aid towards the more successful treatment of the real difficulties with which we have to deal.

3. In the first instance, the common idea, that the narrative was intended to set forth the Divine creation of the entire visible universe, seems undoubtedly correct. On this principle all the theories adverted to may be said more or less fully to proceed. Even those who hold that the six days' work was that of simply perfecting this world regard the writer as being careful to ascribe universal creation to God. So do those who consider the reference to the stars parenthetical, and who would thus virtually limit the six days' work to this earth with its luminaries the sun and moon. By the visible universe, indeed, some would understand only what was visible to the naked eye, and thus exclude those countless worlds which the telescope now brings within the range of vision. For a like reason, all the pre-adamic epochs of organic life, only recently discovered by the light of science, might be excluded. This seems to partake of over-refinement. Nor will it add any real exegetical difficulty to assume that the design of the sacred writer was simply to do what, as a matter of fact, his words

naturally and invariably do, namely, to lead his readers to trace the entire universe to the creative hand of God. We shall afterwards find that the second section of his narrative, in perfect keeping with this design, sets forth, somewhat in detail, the history of primitive man.

4. The universe thus treated of is not described as it actually and absolutely is in itself, or as it exists in space, or according to the relative size, position, and the like of its constituent parts, as it may be viewed in the light of science, but mainly, if not exclusively, in its relation to man on the one hand, and as apparent to the eye of man on the other. For instance, the sun and moon are not contemplated as parts of what men are now familiar with as the solar system, but simply and solely as the great luminaries of this world. What else they are or may be the narrative was not written to teach, but it was left for man to discover. Nor can the fact thus long ago discovered, that the moon is an insignificant body in comparison of the stars, be accounted in the least inconsistent with the fact of the moon being called one of the two great luminaries, as this is perfectly and undeniably true, the moon being a greater luminary to this world than any of the stars, however vast and glorious these may be in themselves. Of course, on the supposition of inspiration, the real Author of the record was perfectly acquainted with all the parts and purposes of His own creation. Had He so willed, He could have revealed what was concealed from the mind of man for many generations. Still, such a revelation would not have served the real and grand purpose in view. The sacred writer accordingly was led, in better keeping with that purpose, to represent things as they appear rather than as they are.

5. Not only so, but it may be well to add here, that though not actually expressed, the idea of the world being the home of mankind seems to underlie the entire descriptive account. To some extent this has doubtless done its part in determining

its peculiar form or structure, and therefore might be to a like extent used to aid towards the appreciation of the order in which the parts of the one Divine work are presented to our view. The force of this will be more clearly seen when we come to deal with the nature of that order, and the difficulties connected with it which have to be overcome. As the Scriptures were written for the use of man and of man alone, and that long before science had so wonderfully extended his knowledge of the vastness of the universe and of the antiquity of the globe, we need not complain of the apparent narrowness of view here given of the creative work of God. All must at least acknowledge that, up to a comparatively recent date, the long continued investigation and contemplation of that work led to no really larger conceptions of it. Till that date, then, the word and the works of God seemed fully to correspond. Now that the latter have been found to be so immense, if the former can still, and on fair principles of interpretation, be seen to be as fit for its purpose and as true to the facts of science as to those of sight or of direct observation, it may well be granted that we have in this, if no perfect proof, at least one note of inspiration.

6. Perhaps we should have observed before now that the entire narrative contained in the first three chapters of Genesis indicates of itself absolutely nothing with respect to the antiquity of man. It would form quite as suitable an introduction to the Bible history on the supposition that thousands of years had to be added to the age of the race, as that of the correctness of the long accepted chronology of the world. In treating of this portion of Scripture, then, we deem it at once fair and wise to leave here untouched all chronological difficulties, great or small, and arising from whatever source. So far as Scripture is concerned, these difficulties pertain, not to this passage, but to those subsequent chapters which contain the various genealogical tables of earliest times, and which, perhaps, without loss to the interests of Scripture interpretation, may yet be found

capable of more correct treatment and more just appreciation.

7. In accordance with all this, and as we have been again and again hinting, we may further remark that, according to the view we take, the scientific element has been almost, if not altogether, excluded from the narrative. We have not said absolutely that it has been altogether excluded, because we may be said to find some slight trace of it in such references as those to the universal ocean and the like. Still, we think, that only in so far as it was unavoidable do we find even an implied allusion to what science alone can determine. All the various parts of the one great whole are simply said to have been effected by the Divine Creator. How He worked, whether by the direct exercise of His power, or by the intervention of appropriate subordinate means, we are not, in so much as one single instance, informed. The Divine agency is all in all. Not one reference do we find to those countless physical causes, or to those successive natural processes, which it is the special function of science to trace and to systematise. We are informed solely of actual and visible results. For example, we are told, that God separated between land and water; but the record is absolutely silent as to those mighty agencies and long continued operations by which the islands and continents were raised from the bosom of the great deep and the mountains were elevated to so vast a height above the level of the sea. So we are in like manner told of the creation of the whole animal kingdom; but whether the Divine Creator directly formed the first of each several species, according to the more common belief, or acted on some principle of development or evolution, as many now hold, the narrative does not state. As already observed, between the Divine Agent and the final result of His operation, no subordinate instrumentality or agency is interposed. Still, there is nothing said or hinted at to imply that such agency or instrumentality was excluded. The entire

universe, thus traced to its true origin, is left perfectly open to the free and full investigation of man.

8. Here we might have treated more largely of this remarkable feature of the narrative, the perfect exclusion of all reference to secondary or subordinate causation. In so far as it is the function of science to trace effects to their causes, to trace the operation of the laws of physical causation, and thus first to discover these laws, and then to apply them towards the further discovery of the nature and development of the order of the universe ; then, as cause after cause is detected, or as law after law is inferred, part after part of the work of the student of nature may be said to be finished, though only to form the beginning of another part which he is to seek in like manner to complete. Such is the great,—we may say, the glorious,—work of man as the Divinely appointed “interpreter of nature.” The whole of this work he is here left to accomplish ; whilst what we may call the exclusively Divine side of creation is presented to our view, or, in other words, God is set forth as the One supreme and universal or all-inclusive Cause.

9. It may indeed be objected, that the whole order of the narrative, from first to last, is, whether true to fact or not, at least of the nature and in the form of science. Nay, some have strongly maintained, that the harmony between this very order and the progressive order of development disclosed by geology is so remarkable, as to form a striking proof of inspiration. However, be the points of coincidence what they may, we cannot agree with these in their view of the structure or of the design of the record. This question of order we regard as the central and main question pertaining to the correct apprehension of the entire meaning of the passage. With it, therefore, we propose chiefly to deal. We are persuaded, that interpreters have erred by supposing that this passage contains a much greater amount of meaning than it was ever intended by its author either to contain or to convey. The real antagonism

is to be found, not between his statements, but between their interpretations and the principles of geology. Too often has it been thought, that the greater amount of truth, both spiritual and scientific, the words of Scripture may be conceived to contain, or, to speak more exactly, may be made to contain, the more highly will they be exalted as words of inspiration. We think it safer, if we err at all, not indeed to take from their meaning, but to fail to perceive a portion of their true meaning, than to see, or rather to fancy that we see, a meaning which they do not possess. In this way, to close these preliminary remarks, we think it will be found that the more carefully we study the record, and the more clearly we perceive its true nature and varied design, the more certainly shall we be led to the conclusion, to which we have already referred, that it is to be regarded as at once thoroughly non-scientific and yet perfectly true.

III.

1. We may begin by at once stating what we deem the true and only principle according to which this portion of Scripture may be justly interpreted in harmony with the certain deductions of modern science; namely, that *the order in which the creative works are recorded in the narrative was not intended to reveal the order of physical development now brought to light, more especially by the science of geology.* We say purposely "*not intended,*" because, whether we regard the record as purely human or as Divinely inspired, we are assured that its structure bears the clearest marks of design or purpose with respect to this matter. The entire arrangement, in fact, may be more fitly described as highly artificial than justly called in any sense really scientific. We may explain.

2. The sacred writer carries our thoughts to a period in the physical history of our planet inconceivably remote when he

says, "And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep." We cannot, however, regard his words as descriptive of any such chaos as they have been so generally supposed to imply. "The deep" spoken of doubtless rested on a bed of solid rock. Nor need we regard these words as necessarily implying that the ocean was absolutely universal. Whilst all anterior operation is passed over in silence, in the course of the narrative three great departments of the Divine work are treated of: *first*, the elevation of the solid surface of the globe; *secondly*, the production of the vegetable kingdom: and *thirdly*, the creation of the animal kingdom as two days' work, and under the fourfold division of fishes, birds, land animals, and man. Apparently, these three departments are represented as separately begun and completed in distinct and successive periods of time: that is to say, the present distribution of land and water appears to be said to have been from first to last effected before any of the flora with which it was primarily clothed were produced; whilst the whole of the vegetable kingdom seems to be said to have been completed before a single animal of any description was brought into being. Such apparently is, or rather, as we would say, such is usually supposed to be, *the order of succession, or temporal order*, of the narrative.

3. We need not say, that this is by no means *the order of succession or temporal order* of geology, which, suitably to our purpose, may be indicated thus:—

First. The geological history, like the Scriptural, carries our thoughts back to that period when we may say, rather generally than absolutely, that the ocean was universal, and when, by the mighty forces of fire and water, the earliest known rocks were formed.

Secondly. Of these earliest known rocks, those in which, though long termed Azoic, the oldest known fossil, fitly called Eozoon or "dawn animal," has comparatively recently been

found, and which have thus been proved to be fossiliferous, are so very ancient, that so distinguished a geologist as the late Sir Charles Lyell has expressed a doubt whether even any granite can be certainly proved to be of anterior formation. We make this remark simply to show that, practically, the first forms of organic life may be said to have been introduced as far back as the period to which we have just referred; and that, from the same remote date, the three kingdoms of nature—the mineral, the vegetable, and the animal—have been developed in contemporaneous parallel lines up to the culminating point of the sacred record, that of the advent of man.

Thirdly. Thus are we led to contemplate, not the elevation of the solid land before life in any form was introduced, but the successive formation of the vast system, or rather the vast systems, of rocks, whether of igneous or of aqueous origin, of which that solid land is itself composed; involving, as it does, not only physical operations rather of great magnitude than of long continuance, but also the slow deposition of those numberless strata of the most varied description, on which have been so wonderfully printed and so faithfully preserved the history of world after world of ever advancing organic life, and which at the same time demonstrate the lapse of not a few eras of such enormous length as can be adequately measured by no human mind.

Fourthly. In illustration of this we might refer to the divisions and subdivisions under which these numerous strata have been tabulated and named, according to their relative antiquity, as determined partly by their position in the series on the one hand, and partly by the character of their fossil contents on the other. The oldest, to which we have already alluded, have been termed Eozoic, to indicate that they retain the traces of the earliest forms of life, or that they were in process of formation when what may be called the long dawn of the measureless day of the reign of life on earth had already begun. To give a mere hint of the enormous length of geo-

logical periods, we may, in passing, simply note, that the Laurentian rocks of Canada, in whose lower, and therefore older, formation, the oldest known fossil has been found, are supposed to have reached a thickness of not less than 30,000 feet ; so that, if piled upon the surface of the earth, they would rise above the highest mountain peaks. We shall only give the names of the three remaining general divisions ; they are the Palæozoic, the Mesozoic, and the Neozoic,—signifying that the rocks so named contain the fossil remains of what may be termed the old, the middle, and the new era or age of organic life in this world, and therefore that the rocks themselves were formed while the vegetable and animal kingdoms flourished after the ever-varying and ever-advancing forms which these remains so wonderfully reveal. We may say, that the first were so designated, because thought to contain the oldest organic remains. As we have been pointing out, such remains have been found of still more ancient date. This fourfold general division, Eozoic, Palæozoic, Mesozoic, and Neozoic, indicating laws of perpetual parallel progressive development in the three kingdoms of nature with which we are now dealing, the mineral, vegetable, and animal, cannot be studied without suggesting a clear, if general, idea of the real order of creation, or without awakening a strong sense of the vastness, complexity, and long continuance of those operations which eventually issued in the constitution of things which we find declared to be “very good” towards the close of the first section of our record. We shall not allude to the tremendous volume of the rocks, or rather, of the groups or systems of rocks of which each division is composed, all tending to create a more and more overwhelming conception of the grandeur of the physical powers, and of the length of the geological periods assuredly involved in the construction of our present cosmos.

Fifthly. If this long series of rocks had been formed, however slowly, yet without material interruption, both the creative work and the creative time must have been thus inconceivably

vast. But this is not all. The mighty mass has again and again been raised so far out of the waters only to sink as often under them. Often has it lost by denudation what it had gained by deposition. The occasional processes of destruction must be remembered as well as the more constant work of construction. Besides, the present solid surface of the globe, which we have had almost entirely in view, is but a part of the multiform result of the physical operations which science brings to light. To an immense extent that surface is composed of materials which once formed a part of continents which have been long ago buried under the waves of the sea, and on which flourished for ages those organic kingdoms of which the embedded fossil remains are the imperishable records. In the words of Sir Charles Lyell ("Principles of Geology," vol. i., p. 260): "Without dwelling on the proofs which geology supplies us of former changes in physical geography, it is not too much to say that every spot which is now dry land has been sea at some former period, and every part of the space now covered by the deepest ocean has been land. The present distribution of land and water encourages us to believe that almost every conceivable transformation in the external form of the earth's crust may have been have gone through. In one epoch the land may have been chiefly equatorial, in another for the most part polar and circumpolar. At one period most of it may have been north of the line, in another south of it; or at one time all in the west, at another the whole of it in the east."

Sixthly. We shall add only one other remark. Whilst this work of stratification and of alternate elevation and depression was going on, subterranean forces of the grandest character were, at more or less distant intervals, brought into play. Masses of molten matter of measureless volume were upheaved with resistless violence, and penetrating through the thickest and hardest rocks, though apparently only destructive, yet, as they cooled down, contributed at once to the complete-

ness and to the stability of the framework of the great house which was in course of erection for the family of man. We may add the following from the same eminent writer ("Elements of Geology," p. 90):—"It may or it may not be true, as the great Leibnitz imagined, that the whole planet was once in a state of liquifaction by heat; but there are certainly no geological proofs that the granite which constitutes the foundation of so much of the earth's crust was ever at once in a state of universal fusion. On the contrary, all our evidence tends to show that the formation of granite, like the deposition of the stratified rocks, has been successive, and that different portions of granite have been in a melted state at distinct and after distant periods. One mass was solid, and had been fractured before another body of granitic matter was injected into it, or through it, in the form of veins. Some granites are more ancient than any known fossiliferous rocks" (though this, he elsewhere says, cannot be fully demonstrated); "others are secondary; and some, such as that of Mont Blanc and part of the central axis of the Alps, of tertiary origin."

4. Thus, then, *the order of succession, or temporal order*, which it is the part of geology to discover and to describe, is not only most complex in itself, but exceedingly unlike the simple order of the sacred record. We have said more than enough to indicate this. The like dissimilarity would have revealed itself, if we had referred to the other portions of the Divine work. This dissimilarity is real; still, it implies no discordance. If the order of the narrative and that of geology were of the same nature or kind, the case would have been entirely different. Their inconsistency would be as clear as the light of day. We maintain, however, that they are totally different in kind, and therefore may both be alike perfectly consistent with fact and with one another. They relate to totally different things. The scientific pertains not only to the complex constitution of the world, but also to the complex pro-

cesses and operations by which that constitution was from first to last brought to its present state of stability and perfection. The real order of succession, or actual temporal order of development, if by no means the only, is at least an important end to be determined by scientific investigation and deduction. The end of the narrative is entirely different. It does not so much as even allude to those processes and operations with which science has to deal. The real order of production or of development, thus an absolutely essential part of the object of scientific research, is in this way absolutely excluded from forming any part of the object of scriptural record and delineation. As we have said, the entire arrangement of the narrative may be more fitly described as highly artificial than justly called in any sense really scientific.

5. We may now proceed to illustrate this, and to show the harmony of the two kinds of order referred to. In the meantime we may premise one or two remarks.

First. We do not mean to say, that the order of the record has absolutely no relation whatever to that of science and of time. Of course, creation must precede construction; the mineral, the organic world; the preparation of the habitations, the introduction of the inhabitants; and the like. Further, the structure of the narrative clearly implies that the creative work was not that of a single instant of time by one grand act of infinite wisdom and power, but rather, that it proceeded in a principle of orderly progression, though, as we have said, the actual order of progress is not revealed.

Secondly. We fully admit that, not only this, but what we have affirmed generally of the order of the record being in its nature rather artificial than scientific seems directly and palpably inconsistent with the order suggested by the introduction of those notes of time which, especially as they appear in our English version, so frequently create the impression of a real and certain discordance.

Thirdly. Whilst it might appear natural to endeavour in the first instance to resolve the great difficulty just suggested, yet as it seems very important to convey a clear conception of the structure of the record as we go on to decipher its import, we deem it best to reserve these very remarkable notes of time for after and more advantageous treatment, and thus in the meantime to suppose them eliminated from the sacred page. When afterwards considered, they will, we are assured, be found not to overthrow, but most decidedly to support, the view of the nature of the record which we now propose to illustrate, and which, as we may repeat, implies as a main and essential principle, *that the order in which the creative works are recorded in the narrative was not intended to reveal the order of physical development now brought to light, especially by the science of geology.*

IV.

I. Our first proof we find in the suggestive manner in which the sacred writer has classified the Divine works.

First. We have already observed, that he makes no mention of subordinate or secondary agency, natural law, physical causation, or the like. The sole as well as supreme agent is God. True, the earth and the waters were commanded to bring forth. Still, this implies no more than that God made use of these in the mysterious origination of life, as He continues to make use of them in the support and multiplication of living beings. They are not said to possess creative powers, whether naturally inherent or Divinely superinduced. What they are said to have brought forth, God is expressly affirmed to have created or made. We can thus, at the very most, only draw the general inference, that the agency or instrumentality of appropriate means was employed, but in what way or to what extent we are not informed.

Secondly. The sacred writer does not give so much as a hint

with respect to the nature or manner of even the Divine operation. He speaks of no consecutive process, and of no series of formative acts. The Divine will is said to have been uttered, and the Divine work to have been done. Between the command and the final result there may have intervened numberless years or not a single moment of time. The creative cause and the consequent effect are simply recorded. Every such effect is presented to our view as perfect in itself, and as perfectly fitted for its intended plan and purpose. Thus, then, we have no details as to the manner of the supreme agency, as we have none with respect to the subordinate instrumentality. Simply as final or finished results of Divine operation are the manifold works of the narrative recorded or described.

Thirdly. These numerous results the sacred writer has set forth as separate departments of nature, general divisions of the one great work of creation, or grouped together under so many heads or kinds of work. The study of each successive paragraph will convince of the correctness of this. The production of light and the establishment of the aerial firmament may well be each regarded as an important and separate department. So each of the three kinds of work to which we have been specially referring, the elevation of the solid land and the creation of the vegetable kingdom on the one hand, and that of the animal on the other. In the case of these, we may at a glance perceive the classification of numerous individual works and their division into so many departments of the general work. One set of objects, thus grouped together and made to form such a department, is peculiarly conspicuous, that of the sun, moon, and stars. After this manner have the constituent parts of the visible universe been divided and presented to our view, not as in the course of slow and complex physical development, but as the complete and perfect result of the exercise of Almighty goodness and skill.

Fourthly. Here we may add two further remarks. In

the first instance, although the photograph of the visible universe is by no means absolutely complete, it is at least sufficiently so for all the practical purposes of the record. And hence, in the second instance, whatever the culture and intelligence of the reader, the perusal of the history never fails to suggest, as it was doubtless intended, the idea of an absolute universality, or that all things without exception are declared to be the work of One Almighty Hand.

2. So much for the sacred writer's descriptive division and classification of the creative works. Let us now, by way of illustration, suppose, as already suggested, that the idea of the erection of a house or home for the human family underlies the entire account, or that it may be said to have, to no small extent, determined its peculiar form or structure. As in the case of an ordinary house, the account might have been extended, embracing numerous details, and indicating, not only the nature of all the kinds of work, but also the exact order in which at least many individual parts were begun and finished. The real order of succession or of time would have thus been observed. This method, however, has for the most obvious as well as important reasons not been adopted. In order to be brief the account had to be general. Hence the classification to which we have referred. No details are given; the order in which the individual parts were completed is not indicated. The writer is content with the simplest and most easily comprehended manner of representing the whole in pictorial form, admirably fitted to meet the eye and the mind of the learned or the unlearned reader alike; just as one may be imagined to describe the erection of an ordinary house, presenting all the portions of work vividly to the mind of a friend who may chance to know very much or very little of the science of the architect or of the art of the builder. In this way, as picture follows picture on the sacred page, the reader's mind takes in the whole as a grand and finely arranged panorama of the

entire creative work. He might indeed infer that the ideal descriptive order coincided, or at least was intended to coincide, with the real creative order; but, if afterwards led to inquire as to the certainty of this, or as to the possibility of the former order being purely descriptive, and mainly intended to convey the simplest and clearest possible conception of the whole, we are persuaded that he would come to observe such evidence of classification and of general division, such marks of artificial description, as would suggest the idea that the order of the narrative at least might not be designed to indicate the exact order of Divine operation, if it did not rather lead to the decided conviction that the Author could not have had any such design.

3. We might have more fully carried out our illustration from the case of an ordinary house. We might have supposed the speaker to have alluded generally to the stone-work, the wood-work, and so on; to have commented on the quality and the cost and the like of each; and to have said more or less as to the commencement and completion of all the parts as he chanced or chose to allude to them in succession. Now what would he think of the intelligence of his hearer, if he found himself understood to mean that the whole was built and finished precisely and literally in the order of succession which in his very brief and general account he had been pleased to follow, or if the inference had been drawn, that as he had said all that he chose to say of the mason-work before speaking of the wood-work, he meant to convey the idea that the whole of the mason-work was actually finished before any part of the wood-work was so much as begun? Let this be applied to the case of the writer and reader of the sacred narrative. Apart from the successive allusions to time, whose meaning we reserve for subsequent consideration, would it not be as unreasonable to infer that each of the works or departments of work recorded, implying, as it does, like the mason-work or

wood-work of a house, a great variety of parts or particulars, must have been finished before the next was begun, nay, before any or all of those afterwards mentioned were touched by the all-creative hand? It might, indeed, be said, that the artificer being in this case Divine, each portion of His work may be supposed to have been completed in an instant of time, and that therefore to infer that it was actually finished before the next alluded to was begun would be by no means unreasonable. Still, this would imply the direct exercise of Divine power, to the absolute exclusion of all subordinate agency, whilst the record, as we found, seems rather to indicate the use of this, and cannot at least be said to affirm aught to the contrary; so that, if science infallibly proves not only the use of such agency, but also its long continued operation, we are bound to interpret accordingly. Thus, then, are we brought to a double important conclusion: namely, that, on the one hand, the general order of the narrative is by no means naturally, far less necessarily, to be regarded as intended to indicate the real or temporal order of the Divine works successively mentioned; and that, on the other, we are by no means bound to hold that the whole of each successively recorded work was meant to be viewed as absolutely finished before the next or even any of the others was actually begun.

V.

1. This will be more clearly seen and more forcibly illustrated, if we carefully consider a very remarkable feature of the sacred narrative, to which more than one interpreter has of late been calling attention, and which we would now refer to as the second proof of the correctness of our view of the non-scientific nature of the history. We refer to the striking parallelism which marks the twofold order in which the creative works are arranged. The preceding argument is based upon the peculiar manner in which the works are separated or

grouped together as so many kinds or departments of work. The argument now adduced is based upon the peculiar manner in which these departments are arranged in relation to one another.

2. After stating generally the fact of universal creation, and alluding to the early condition of the earth, the sacred writer, in successfully recording the entire series of Divine works, divides them into two distinct classes. At the head of the first he places the production of light. Though we are not told of the creation or formation of the element of water, we are at least informed of the separation of the water above the firmament from the water below it, as also of the separation of land and water. In this way are added to light, water, air, land, and, lastly, the whole vegetable kingdom. The second class consists of the luminaries, fishes, birds, land animals and man. Now, observe the parallelism or correspondence of the two classes to which we refer. We have, at the head of the first, the production of light; and at that of the second, the formation of the luminaries; next, we have water and air alluded to in their relative connection on the one hand, and the fishes and birds on the other; and, finally, we find reference made, on the one side to the "dry land," or solid earth clothed with vegetation, and on the other to the land animals and man. In this way the second three days' Divine operations are represented in palpably designed parallel relationship to the first three days' work. This has sometimes been indicated thus :—

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Light. | 4. The Luminaries. |
| 2. The Sea and Air . . . | 5. Fishes and Birds. |
| 3. Land and Vegetation . | 6. Land Animals and Man. |

3. We need hardly say, that no one can possibly contemplate such a scheme of arrangement without being struck with its marked peculiarity, or without coming to the conclusion,

that the structure of the narrative is designedly artificial, nay, from beginning to end so thoroughly such as to exclude all appearance of scientific design. To some this has seemed sufficient to prove the record non-historical; to others it has sufficed to suggest that the whole is simply poetical. We should agree with the former did they mean by non-historical non-scientific. As to the latter, we cannot admit that we have here a mere poetical parallelism, or that the whole is a grand hymn or psalm of creation. In both cases the real design of the writer has been missed. As we have already seen, the idea of a house or home was present to his mind, to no small extent affecting the form of his narrative. The order is thus purely that of the descriptive, and not that of the works described. Unless on this supposition, how unnatural to separate the luminaries from the light! We shall return to this again. In the meantime, we may merely say, how unreasonable to trace it to scientific ignorance or error! The very separation appears clearly to imply that their most palpable physical relationship was designedly overlooked.

This is proved by the fact that the place of the luminaries at the head of the second class is precisely the same as that of the light at the head of the first. Why such an arrangement? Why not place them together as one great work of God, or at least as two distinct but closely connected works? This cannot be said to be accidental. It is part of an arrangement which we have shown to be too complex and artificial to have been undesignated. Why, again, place the fishes and birds of the second class in parallel relationship to the sea and air of the first? Why, further, in like manner place the tenants of the "dry land" in parallel relationship to that land as their intended habitation? The inference is clear. In the construction of the sacred record, Divine art, and not human science, true or false, determined the form and course of the whole. To find fault, accordingly, on the ground that the production of the light is said to have preceded the existence

of the sun, moon, and stars, or that the elevation of the solid land is said to have been completed before any form of organic life was created, or that the whole vegetable kingdom was developed before any part of the animal was produced, is simply to show a total misconception of the design and of the nature of the narrative.

4. Now assuming that the order of physical development was not intended, we may here remark, that the sacred writer stood in need of no such series of visions as has been supposed by certain ingenious interpreters. We have no reference to any object in nature which an intelligent observer might not see with the external eye, or, as in the case of the atmosphere, perceive through its phenomena.

5. Nor need we suppose with others, that we have here a revelation given to Adam, and handed down by tradition. The points of resemblance between our record and certain ancient cosmogonies do certainly suggest, if they do not fully demonstrate, that substantially it existed before it was thus put into shape by the lawgiver of Israel. However, in dealing with it as inspired, we are not called upon to burden our interpretation with any such difficulties as may attend the supposition of a primitive and traditional revelation. Whatever his previous ideas, or those of the age in which he lived, and whatever the sources of his information, the sacred writer is to be simply viewed as led, in what manner we need not inquire, to record the facts here stated, and that in the peculiar form in which he has stated them, as he probably did, without the consciousness of thus providing the appropriate introduction to the future complete volume of inspiration, whilst writing what he intended and knew to be a fit opening to the book of Genesis.

6. We might here make use of the view of the narrative now given to indicate how certain difficulties may be easily and satisfactorily removed. To avoid needless repetition we

shall postpone all further allusion to these till we are prepared to deal with them still more easily and satisfactorily, and now proceed to treat of the design and import of those peculiar notes of time which we have reserved for special consideration.

VI.

1. We refer to the mysterious days of creation. Viewed apart from these, the sacred narrative, we may safely affirm, has been found to contain no such scientific statements, or even allusions, as can well be supposed to afford room for scientific criticism. We come now to deal with these, suggesting at the outset, as they do, two questions of the greatest importance—perhaps, also, of the greatest difficulty—in the work of interpretation.

2. The first is: What are we to understand these so-called days to import?—natural days of four and twenty hours, or indefinite periods of whatever length science, rather than Scripture, may help us to determine? It will be seen that up to this point our reasonings have virtually proceeded on the latter supposition. We acknowledge at once that, on the supposition of ordinary days, our theory of interpretation would utterly fail.

3. The second question is: Does the order of the days or periods apparently set forth by these successive references to time of necessity imply a corresponding order of Divine operation? If it does, we again admit that our theory would in like manner utterly break down. What, therefore, we have to prove is, that the order indicated by the real phraseology of the writer is not of necessity to be regarded as that which has seemingly been universally gathered from our English translation. We think we have already shown that the structure of the narrative proves that it was formed to suggest an order in the description rather than an order in the Divine causation. Now we come

to inquire whether the introduction of these notes of time really and finely falls in with what that structure thus suggests, and in this way proves that the plan of the whole is harmonious and unique, as intended for its complex purpose, or whether it does the very reverse, and so apparently frustrates the purpose which that peculiar structure seems to demonstrate. We shall proceed to deal with this difficult question first, and therefore would venture to assume that the days may be taken for indefinite periods, leaving the proof for after consideration.

4. We now proceed, then, to inquire into the nature of the order suggested by these notes of time, and thus to develop our third argument in support of our general principle of interpretation. We have already virtually admitted that the authorised version naturally suggests, if it does not necessarily imply, the idea that the real order of cosmical development was intended. However, a very slight and what some would deem a meaningless alteration may be found to be of real and very decided significance. We refer here entirely to the numerals employed and to the very peculiar use of the Hebrew article. In more recent translations what we mean has been clearly indicated, though what we deem the real design of the writer, however hinted at, has never, so far as we know, been employed in the interest of a more correct interpretation. According to the Hebrew, the sacred writer may be fairly, as he is now usually, represented as saying, "And there was evening, and there was morning;" or more briefly, "And evening was and morning was *one* day; and evening was and morning was *a* second day; and evening was and morning was *a* third day; and evening was and morning was *a* fourth day; and evening was and morning was *a* fifth day; and evening was and morning was *the* sixth day;" and then without reference to evening or morning, we are afterwards instructed as to "*the* seventh day."

Now let the numerals here used as well as the absence and

the presence of the definite article here marked, be duly considered. Instead of "*the first* day," we have simply, "*one* day;" the cardinal and not the ordinal being employed. If no reason could be assigned for this usage in this place, it would be unsafe to put any real weight upon it. We are very far from intending to say, with some, that the employment of the cardinal "*one*" here implies marked emphasis on the one hand, and the peculiarity or extraordinary character of the day on the other, as if it could hardly be viewed as a literal day of four and twenty hours, or as if we needed no further proof that a lengthened period was intended. We point to it mainly as used in keeping with our view of the real force of these notes of time, or as falling in with the way in which the article is, we think, systematically omitted or introduced. As has been indicated, in the case of the first five days the definite article is wanting, whilst it is present in that of the last two, *the* sixth, and *the* seventh. Must we look upon this as entirely accidental, and by no means intentional? Have we not here an instance of well marked system, and therefore of design? The mere separate or single use of the article might fail to indicate much. Here the systematic use of it appears to signify a great deal, and that too in perfect keeping with what we have already found to be at least suggested—may we not say, fully proved?—by the peculiar structure of the narrative; in fact, that the sacred writer here, as through that structure, did not at all mean to convey the idea of a real or temporal order.

5. This may, perhaps, be best explained and proved by means of the following simple and homely illustration. To connect it with our former illustration from the case of the erection of a house, and as thus the better suited to our purpose, we may take it from that of an ordinary account, say, of work charged for certain small house-repairs. Let us suppose an agent to enter briefly to this effect,—“Wages to so and so, six days’ work for such and such a house, so much.” In look-

ing over the general account, this entry attracts the attention of his employer, who at once suspects, from personal knowledge, that there must be some mistake. He requests explanation. His agent returns some such statement as this,—“Mason-work, *one* day ; joiner-work, *a* second day ; painting so and so, *a* third day ; papering, *a* fourth day ; plastering, *a* fifth day ; slater-work, *the* sixth day.” What would be the natural inference as to the general meaning, and especially as to the order of the work thus represented as done ? Would the employer conclude that the statement was so arranged as to indicate, not only what he wished to know, namely, the work done for which he was charged the equivalent of one man’s work for six days, but also the precise order in which the entire work in all its details was successively done ? Would he infer that his agent intended him to believe that the whole of the mason-work was begun and finished on *the first* day ; the whole of the joiner-work, on *the second* day ; and so on ;—that is to say, that the whole of the kind of work first mentioned was completed before the next kind of work specified was begun ; and that the whole of this kind, again, in all its particulars, was in like manner done before even a single portion of the next, or of any of the after-mentioned kinds of work, was so much as touched by the hand of the workman ? Could he, on this ground, possibly object to the correctness of the statement, and say, “ Now, here must be some mistake ; for I saw part of the mason-work done on the last of the days referred to, a portion of the joiner-work done on the fourth, a good deal of the papering on the first, nay, more than one workman busily engaged more than once at one and the same time ? ” Would he not rather perceive at a glance, that the very classification of particulars under so many kinds of work, together with the peculiar use of the indefinite article on the one hand and of the definite article on the other, in the notation of time, clearly indicated the real nature of the statement, and thus the real character of the order adopted,—in fact, that the order in which the work was done is not really

indicated at all. In each of the first five cases, the kind of work mentioned is simply represented as one day's work. Details are not given. For aught positively stated, the order of the account might or might not have been the order of the work ; though, on the former supposition, why should not the definite article have been used throughout, as in the English version, but not in the Hebrew, *the* first day, *the* second day, and so on to the end ? The more likely then would the writer appear to mean, that he did not refer to the order of the work at all, that he had simply grouped together the numerous details, and that he wished his employer merely to understand that the whole amounted to six days' work. The use of the cardinal rather than the ordinal number in the first instance would markedly consist with this. The use of the indefinite article, corresponding with the absence of the Hebrew article, would seem fully to prove it. Nay, the whole structure of the statement would suggest to the employer a key to the harmony between what he had personally observed and what at first sight might seem inconsistent with it. He had seen a part of the mason-work done on the last day alluded to. But that work is not said to have been finished or even so much as begun on *the* first day. Nor would the inference have been correct, that at least the whole of it was done on one and the same individual day. A portion of it, greater or less, might have been done on each of the six days, the sum of the six portions of time amounting to one day, or the sum of the six portions of work amounting to one day's work. This would account for the consistency of the statement with the other facts observed, especially with what seemed the most inconsistent of all, that more than one man was sometimes seen to be engaged at work. But what of the use of the definite article at the close of the account,—“*the* sixth day” ? Would not this upset the whole of the free interpretation thus far put upon the words ? Would it not at least imply that the whole of the last mentioned work must have been done on it ? We say

certainly not. The fair conclusion would rather be, that the writer still kept to his purpose of simply indicating, not the real order, but the mere amount of the six days' work. If he had gone on to add, "slater-work, *a sixth day*," he would have stated nothing really incorrect, but he would have failed to indicate, by the simple use of the definite article, that it made up the complete number of days or was *the sixth and last* day's work. In fact, such a use of the article would thus tend to prove the correctness of the entire meaning attached to the statement.

Though in this illustration we have introduced nothing to correspond with the use of the Hebrew article in the case of *the seventh day*, or day of Divine rest, we may here add that, in perfect keeping with our principle of interpretation and confirmatory of it, is the presence of the article in that instance, as that day was certainly *the seventh*, as being actually subsequent to the entire sum of the other six, so that, in the only case in which temporal succession was to be marked, we find it indicated by the presence of the article. In this way, then, when we study the sacred narrative in the light of our illustration, we find the article absent in precisely the five cases in which it ought to be absent, and present in precisely the two cases in which it ought to be present, if our principle of interpretation be deemed correct.

6. We have designedly carried out our illustration to very considerable length, that we may the more simply and clearly apply it to the difficult and vastly important matter in hand. We shall afterwards consider the reason or reasons for which we suppose the sacred writer to have adopted some such method of arrangement. In passing it may be observed that, as in the illustration, so in the sacred record, we suppose that the word "*day*" may be viewed as so used as to have the force of "*the equivalent of a day*," and that *one day's work* may be viewed as simply *equivalent to one day's work*. That the sacred

writer should make so free a use of the terms necessarily employed will be seen, as in the case of our illustration, when we come to interpret on the one hand, and when, as just alluded to, we come to treat of the reason or reasons for the adoption of the peculiar form of the narrative on the other.

7. Here we shall make use of our illustration in dealing with only one of the chief difficulties felt by the interpreter, reserving the consideration of the others till we have fully expounded our theory, and treated of what we deem the strongest objections which can be made to it. The difficulty to which we refer, and to which we have already alluded, is due to the fact that the light is spoken of as created before the known sources of it are said to have been existent. However, we have already seen such clear evidence of artificial arrangement as might suffice to set aside every objection based upon the idea of a correct scientific order. We are now prepared to ask, What have we just found the sacred writer really saying? That the light was created on *the* first day, and the luminaries on *the* fourth? By no means; his words prove no more than that the light was one day's work, while the luminaries formed another. It is not even said that the former was created *on* "day *one*," or that the latter were created *on* "day *fourth*." So peculiarly are these notes of time introduced, that no part of any of the kinds of work is expressly said to have been done *on* any one individual day.

The whole is thus wonderfully left open for such an interpretation as our illustration suggests, namely, that each kind of work, in all its really countless details, is simply regarded as amounting to one day's work; so that, as we have already said, each day is also to be regarded as simply equivalent to a whole day, or to a sixth part of the entire creative week. As in the case of our illustration, we thus cannot tell from the narrative alone on what actual day the work was accomplished, or whether, more or less, it may not have been carried on through-

out two or more of the immense periods here represented as days of creation.

Is it objected, then, that the light is said to have been created before the sun? We reply: for aught that these successive references to time can really prove, the light was created along with the sun, or the sun before the light, or the countless and mighty as well as mysterious operations, whether natural or Divine, by which both light and luminaries were, during the lapse of numberless ages, so constituted and prepared to fulfil their appointed purposes in relation to this world, may have extended over a large portion of the creative week. The narrative, accordingly, stands in need of no defence. It really does not indicate the order of their production. To treat it as affirming any such order is simply to put into it something which it does not contain, and which, though not itself, may be found inconsistent with fact.

8. Though this ought to suffice, we may add a few remarks as to this matter.

Firstly. The separation here made between the grand work of creating the light and the like grand work of forming the luminaries perfectly consists with fact. It proceeds on the ground of the distinction between these when viewed simply as worlds or mere material bodies on the one hand, and when regarded as specially the sources of terrestrial illumination on the other. There was room for this separation, then, whatever the scientific theory of light maintained: whether the Corpuscular, according to which it is viewed as a separate material element flowing from the luminous body, be it the sun or any other; or the Undulatory, according to which light is traced to the undulations of what may well be accounted one of most wonderful of the works of God—the luminiferous ether which is held to be diffused through the celestial spaces, and which is subtle and susceptible of vibration to an absolutely inconceivable degree; or, we may add, even that which Sir W. Grove

has suggested in his profound work on "The Correlation of Physical Forces," and which, while also undulatory, differs from the latter in this, that it supposes the universally diffused matter to be, not *sui generis* as the other is regarded, but ordinary or possessing the qualities of ordinary matter. On any supposition, we repeat, there was sufficient ground for the separation, provided the sacred writer had any wish or reason, as doubtless he had, for separating the two departments of the Divine work in question. No charge of physical error can be preferred. Rather one such error may be said to have been thus avoided, We refer to that of speaking of the moon as if it were actually luminous. But, why, it may be asked, put the stream before the fountain, the light before the source of the light? Whatever other reasons may have existed, one at least may be here suggested, that if the separation was desirable or proper at all, it could far more easily and simply be made by putting the light first as a distinct existence and object of thought, than by speaking of the sources of the light first, and thus leading the reader to identify or to confound these sources with the light itself.

Secondly. We are not to understand the creation of light here alluded to as that of some mere transient source of illumination, by which, in the absence of sun or moon, the earth was at first at least partially enlightened. We here stand in no need of such astronomical hypotheses as have been resorted to. The sacred writer refers to the whole finished work by which our world was, not temporarily and seemingly needlessly, but permanently and necessarily, provided with its normal supply of light and heat. That work is spoken of as done and as perfect, and thus pronounced "good." As already said, we are informed of the complete and final result of Divine operation, whether concentrated in one creative act, or, as we hold, carried on through ages of widest and most complicated physical causation. All this is proved by the fact that the light spoken of is said at once to be "divided from the darkness"

which is called "night," and to be itself called by the name of "day," and therefore is just the light which continues to form our day by continuing to enlighten our earth. In fact, we cannot regard this great work as really finished before the atmosphere was fully prepared for the intended transmission, diffusion, and reflection of that light. As the real order of the narrative was not designed to indicate the real order of development, we are left free to interpret in keeping with this view of the matter.

Thirdly. We may here add that the same holds with respect to the sun and moon. They are not spoken of as under any course or process of formation, but as fully and finally prepared for their place in the firmament, and for their purpose of regularly and permanently enlightening the earth. They are said to have been placed in the firmament for this end; and we may say of them, as of the light, that the Divine work involved was not complete when they were simply created, nor when they were fitted to impart abundant light, nor till the earth was fully prepared to receive that light, or the atmosphere fully fitted, as we have said, for its transmission, diffusion, and reflection. Thus, while the terms of the record determine no physical order, they suggest that, to all intents, the threefold work of providing the light, the luminaries, and the atmosphere for their respective and permanent ends in the economy of our world, however long and variously carried on, had in reality one common termination. As, in the case of our illustration, more than one man might be supposed at work at the same time, and might, further, be supposed to finish more than one kind of work at the same time, so the nature of the sacred narrative admits of the supposition of the great Divine Agent carrying on all kinds of work contemporaneously, and bringing any two or more of them to a contemporaneous end.

Fourthly. Though, in the case of inspiration, a writer need not be regarded as fully understanding every sentence which he is led to frame, we are persuaded that the sacred author,

not only committed no blunder in his arrangement of the Divine works, but that he really regarded the luminaries as existent when the light is said to have been produced. What God is simply said to have done in the one instance, He is expressly declared to have done in the other by means of the luminaries, namely, "to divide the light from the darkness," clearly implying that when God divided the light from the darkness, the luminaries by which He divided them were already existent and prepared to effect the division. But this is not all. In the one case, the light is identified with the day and called by that name, as is the darkness with the night ; whilst in the other case the luminaries are directly said "to divide the day from the night," to do in fact that without which there could be no alternate day and night at all. The sacred writer, then, in recording the provision of the light before recording the production of the luminaries is by no means to be understood as in any possible way erring with respect to the order of creation.

Fifthly. We have suggested one reason for the arrangement of the narrative, that if they were to be set forth as separate departments of work, simplicity and perspicuity would seem to favour that adopted. Whilst we may not be able to discover the real determining reasons, and may easily err in judging concerning them, we may suggest the following. In the first instance, we may naturally suppose a very important spiritual or religious reason for separating them ; namely, that not only the sun and moon, or the heavenly bodies in general, should be distinctly declared to be merely created objects, and thus in no way whatever to be honoured or worshipped as living beings or real divinities, as they have been so widely regarded and treated by mankind, but also that light itself, in its purest form, and therefore, in every form, was no more than a product of Almighty skill, and thus not to be, like the heavenly bodies, adored and worshipped as a God. Further, we may suppose, that if we consider, as we have done, that the idea of the

erection of a house has so far given shape to the narrative, the point at which the luminaries are introduced will also appear appropriate. Just as the house was represented as built and supplied with needful food, so before the varied tribes of living inhabitants were introduced, these great lamps are fitly said to have been "set in the firmament of heaven, to give light upon the earth." Lastly, we may add, that in alluding to the light first the sacred author may have had regard to the nature and symmetry of his narrative. In this way, he was enabled in the outset to define what he meant by a day; whilst at the same time, till he thus introduced the light, he could not allude, according to a very important purpose, to the days of creation. Nay, we may regard him as referring to both light and firmament, before referring to the luminaries for a very important, we might almost say, for a sufficient reason, that he could not well speak of the light-bearers before speaking of the light, as he could not well speak of the former as placed in the firmament, before showing what the firmament was.

VII.

1. To many minds so peculiar a structure as that of our record will appear strange, and even unreal. They will wonder why so ancient a writer should have been led to adopt a style so complex and artificial, the more especially if under Divine inspiration. Still, we think we have proved that the structure, as now indicated, is real, whatever we may deem the true cause or reason of its construction, and also that it is now found to have enabled the writer to record the facts of creation in such a way that, to say the least, these facts themselves, now demonstrated by modern science, after the lapse of so many ages, do not in any one instance disprove the correctness of the narrative. We think, however, we can assign more than one sufficient reason for the adoption of the very style here employed.

2. In the first instance, if he intended, or rather, if the Divine Spirit intended, to lead him to write what would suit men of all ages, those whose knowledge of the universe was due to the mere use of the senses as well as those whose knowledge was vastly enlarged by the aids of natural science, we can imagine no better or other way than that of grouping together, under so many heads, the numerous objects in nature, and of simply declaring them to have been created or formed by the hand of God. Nor can we imagine a more satisfactory manner in which he could have excluded the idea of a scientific arrangement than that realised in the two artificial parallel divisions of the narrative. What was the real thing to be done? Why, if it had been requisite merely to divide the whole creative work into a certain number of parts, we might perceive no great difficulty in grouping together so many particulars, as he has actually done, and in ascribing every group to the will and power of God. But if it was also necessary to represent that great and really indivisible work under at least a sixfold division, and yet in such a manner as should consist with the future disclosures of science, we need not be astonished if the method successfully adopted be found to be as peculiar and as complex as is this ancient and faultless record of creation; nay, we may rather be astonished to find any narrative so constructed as to be capable of conveying so much spiritual truth without mixture of physical error.

3. But, it may be asked, why should such a sixfold division have been accounted necessary in a simple record of the manifold works of God? Here we are led to deal with what we deem the principal, if not the sole, reason for the adoption of so peculiar a kind of description, and the right apprehension and treatment of which can alone enable us to use the true key to the entire meaning. It has been said that here we have a mere myth invented for the purpose of lending Divine sanction to the law of the Jewish sabbath. Nothing could well be said

much further from the truth, or much less respectful towards the sacred volume. Yet at the same time, we are assured, that the Divine institution of the sabbath forms the real and fundamental reason for the adoption of the peculiar and complex structure of the sacred record. We are persuaded that, unless for the purpose of forming a Divine basis for the human conduct Divinely required, no sufficient or satisfactory reason can be found in Scripture or suggested by any man for the sixfold division of the one great creative work. Whilst other grand purposes were to be served, and, for aught we know, might have been easily served, by means of the simplest and shortest statements, in the presentation of the Divine work and rest, analogically, as a typical or symbolic foundation on which as well to commend as to command the observance of the law of corresponding human work and rest, difficulties, to us apparently insuperable, had to be overcome, and the very method of the narrative to be adopted.

4. The grand problem to be solved, we may say, was really this,—*How to compress within a limited space a general yet comprehensive account of the visible universe, viewed in special relationship to mankind, and that in such a way that it would on the one hand present the great Creator as in such manner working and resting as to set forth an appropriate basis for a Divine command with respect to human work and rest, and on the other, be of such a nature as to suit all classes of men, from the time of the writer to the end of the world, that is to say, throughout all periods of scientific progress even to that of highest advancement, no less than during all those of non-scientific times.*

Such a problem may seem of impossible solution, at least by the mind of man. We are fully assured that it has been solved by this history of creation; we are assured, also, that no one can suggest any other principle on which it could, even in the present day, with all the aids of science, be satisfactorily solved,

unless that on which the sacred record has been so wonderfully and, if the manifold purpose be kept in view, we may add so simply, constructed.

However many and scientifically forcible the objections which have been urged against its Divine inspiration, we may safely say, that the human mind, with all the advantages of modern light, could not furnish another and more scientifically correct account of creation than the one now under consideration. When we say "scientifically correct," we are not unmindful of a fundamental principle of our theory of interpretation, viz., that the record is thoroughly non-scientific. What we mean to bring prominently forward is, that, for an ancient writer, in whatever way educated, we might say, especially when brought up in connection with the false science of Egypt, to write so much truth with respect to the universe, above all, to present any ideal division whatever of the one and really indivisible work of creation, and that with perfect freedom from physical error, nay, without falling into the grossest absurdities, appears of itself sufficient to prove the presence of more than human science or skill.

5. Here, however, it may be objected, as it has again and again been, that such an interpretation as would suit these modern times cannot possibly be admitted to have suited those times in which the earth was believed to be the real centre of the visible universe, or around which the sun and moon and stars daily revolved; because any narrative, which could be interpreted in harmony with modern ideas must, if in like harmony with the ideas of ancient times, have for ages deceived mankind, and so could not have been inspired by the God of truth; so that the only way to escape the difficulty thus suggested is simply to regard the writer as conveying in simple language the ideas of his own mind, if not of his own age, respecting the visible world.

To all this we reply, that, even though it had to be granted

that the Bible account had once led all men to interpret according to the narrow conceptions of more ignorant times, this can be no argument against its adaptation to the larger ideas of the universe which now obtain,—an adaptation which we think we have proved, and which at least it belongs to every one to test for himself; nor can it be proved inconsistent with the perfect veracity of God. We might as well maintain that the whole visible universe itself, which for so many ages has seemingly given ocular demonstration to the enormous error that the earth was the real centre of all, and that all the apparent motions of the heavenly bodies were real, had actually proved so deceptive as to compromise the veracity of Him whose work it is. We admit that, so long as men contemplated the works of God in the light of sense alone they naturally regarded the earth as the common centre, and we admit also, that so long as they thus regarded the works of God they would as naturally interpret His Word on a like narrow and mistaken principle.

When, however, they came to investigate these works more fully, and when the true key to their interpretation was discovered and used by Copernicus and his illustrious successors, their ideas underwent a mighty revolution, and the veil fell from the seemingly blind eyes of mankind; but they did not turn round and declare that the grand deception which the visible creation had seemingly practised upon them so successfully for many ages was inconsistent with absolute veracity on the part of the great Creator. So if we now find that the word of God has been written on such a principle, that it may be faithfully interpreted in harmony with the enlarged conceptions and the more exact knowledge of modern or rather of these recent times, shall we turn round and charge the apparent deception and real misunderstanding of former generations to the account of any want of truthfulness on the part of the author, or, to say what is meant, that that apparent deception or real misunderstanding is sufficient proof that God could not possibly be the

author? Do we not rather discover a new resemblance between the word and works of God, and thus a new proof of their common origin? Nay, the history of the interpretation of these two volumes of Divine revelation, in so far as the matter in hand is concerned, suggests other points of resemblance. As far back as the time of Pythagoras it was suspected that the apparent were not the real movements of the universe, —that the apparent was not the real position of the earth. So, in early Christian times, it was suspected that the meaning which the sacred history appeared so naturally to suggest might not be the real meaning after all. Not a few had had their suspicions and their guesses, who failed to give the interpretation of nature which Copernicus gave and demonstrated to be true. In like manner, not a few had their suspicions and their guesses as to the real nature of the sacred narrative before the rise of geology led to modes of interpretation designed to illustrate the harmony between ancient Scripture and modern science.

Further, even after Copernicus had given the clearest evidence that the apparent movements of the heavenly bodies were due to the diurnal revolution of the earth, not a few otherwise learned and enlightened men objected, apparently with irresistible evidence, that the new system of astronomy was infallibly demonstrated to be erroneous by the simple fact, that it directly contradicted the senses of mankind. In some such way, too, has the idea been resisted, that the sacred record should be interpreted on any other principle than that on which it was interpreted before the rise of modern science. At first, this was done by a few devoted supporters of its Divine origin; now, this is done by some with a view to prove that it is destitute of the stamp of truth and Divine authority. Still, we simply have in all this the more fully illustrated the parallel which we here suggest between the interpretation of the works and that of the word of God on the one hand, and between the works and the word of God themselves on the other.

6. We may now return to the consideration of what we have accounted the principal if not the sole reason for the adoption of so peculiar a form as that of the record. We have traced that reason to Divine purpose in relation to the sabbath institution. There can be no doubt as to the vast importance of that institution in the view of the writer, whether Divinely inspired or not. Even those who doubt his inspiration will acknowledge that the laws of Israel show how sacred and important that institution was in the eyes of the lawgiver. We direct attention to this, because it suggests the idea that, in so important and sacred an institution, the author of the record of creation could not fail to find a sufficient reason for doing what we hold him to have done, namely, to have so constructed his narrative as to provide an appropriate basis for the law of the sabbath. Again, if we simply contemplate the Author as Divine, then we must believe that He would adapt the history of His own works to the case of His people of every age, and, at the same time, do so in a way fitted to supply such a basis for the law of the sabbath, provided that law was regarded by Him as of great importance to mankind. Now, we have simply to consider all that was said of it by Moses and the prophets, not to speak of how it is referred to in the Epistle of the Hebrews, as connected with even the rest of eternity, and then to add what we know of the use of such a day, in the whole economy of the Divine and spiritual life of men, if we would see abundant reason for the conclusion that, in the mind of God, that day formed a perfectly sufficient reason for such a modification of the form of the record as we have traced to the Divine design of lending the most influential support as well as the most express sanction to the institution in question.

7. The words with which this section closes are in full keeping with this:—"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their host, and on the seventh day God finished His work which He made; and He rested on the seventh day from

all His work which He made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because on it He rested from all His work which God created and made." We here add one other remark on this point, that, so thoroughly do the successive notes of time appear to be artificially inserted in order to serve the end referred to, that the narrative will read as well and appear as complete without as with them. Reading apart from them, we simply and solely miss what we have maintained to be their only design, we mean that connected with the sabbath day.

8. Assuming, then, that such was the Divine purpose, let us inquire how such a purpose could have been best effected. Remembering and weighing the express declaration of Him who knew the nature of man, and by whom, we are told, "the world was made," that "the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath," we may fairly infer that it was intended and adapted to meet those wants which are due to his constitution and circumstances, affording opportunity for the cultivation of his moral and spiritual nature, and therefore, that the best possible arrangement which could have been made by his Divine Creator is assuredly that fixed by the law of the sabbath. If a different proportion of the times of work and rest had been selected, we may conclude that the selection would not have been so thoroughly suitable for the purpose.

Let this idea be firmly grasped, and then shall we perceive sufficient reason for such a representation of the Divine ground or basis for the proposed human practice as would show that basis to correspond with the nature of the practice itself. If the division of the Divine work had not corresponded with that of the human work of which it was to form the declared model, the fitness of the former would have been wanting. The question arises as to whether there was a real sixfold division in the work of God corresponding to the six days' labour of man, and thus affording a real basis for the sabbath institution, or whether the one and really indivisible work of God could

not be justly represented as simply ideally portioned out into six separate groups or departments, and may not in point of fact have been actually so divided and so represented. Now to this question we reply, that we cannot suppose any actual or real division of the Divine work corresponding to the Scripture account, if regarded as scientific. Nor need we seek such, as we have already shown that it is not a geological or scientific account at all. In seeking such, our ablest harmonists have of necessity failed. In the light of astronomy and geology, the creation of the visible universe is seen to be one vast work, proceeding according to what we have already called parallel progression, in marked contrast with that which the sacred record has been supposed to exhibit, and which may be called that of successive divisions or departments; that is to say, as we have elsewhere fully illustrated, the order of science and that of Scripture are totally different in nature or kind, so that it would be utterly vain to attempt to classify and divide the countless processes involved in the creative work. By simply separating or grouping together the final results of Divine operation, we have found the sacred writer acting upon the only practical principle on which any palpable division could be made and represented.

9. On this practical principle we find the Divine work divided and arranged. The propriety of this may be easily perceived.

First. The more general design was to illustrate the principle on which God would have mankind to act, that of working first, and then of resting and enjoying the precious results of work. In fact, God was thus to appear as a Father, presenting a fit and perfect example to His family. Work was to be dignified and encouraged.

Secondly. For physical as well as spiritual purposes, God had resolved to institute the sabbath as a day of frequently recurring rest from toil, as well as of spiritual employment and delight. The grand work of creation was to be kept in per-

petual remembrance with all the privileges and enjoyments with which its remembrance was associated.

10. We have said that the appointment of one day in seven proves that such an arrangement was accounted most suitable to the constitution and circumstances of man, as we cannot suppose God to appoint any save the most suitable proportion of time. How then could this be most easily and impressively done? We can conceive no better method than that which we believe was actually adopted, namely, that of dividing His own vast work into as many separate portions as He knew to amount to the number of successive days which it would be wisest and best to command men to work. Had that number been eight or ten or twelve, we conceive it would have been equally proper to have divided His own model work into like corresponding parts. If we glance over the record, we may perceive that it at least appears to present such a division of the entire work as might have been used to set forth a different proportion from that actually appointed. Thus, the separation of land and water and the production of the vegetable kingdom might have been assigned to two distinct days or periods of time. In like manner the fishes might have formed one day's work, and the birds another. Still further, one day might have been devoted to the irrational animals of the dry land, and another to the creation of man. The successive paragraphs of the narrative indicate such an extended division. However the Divine Author of both works and word saw meet to appoint six days of work to be followed by one day of rest; and therefore, we are assured, He led the inspired writer to divide His creative work into six rather than any other number of separate portions, and thus to group together certain parts of that work, and to represent each group or each separate department of work under the denomination of one day's work; the six days of creation being, as we believe and hope now to prove, not solar or human days, as the work was not human work, but

what we may call Divine days, as the work was Divine work,—the term day being most fitly employed in the one case to correspond with the term day in the other.

VIII.

1. The work was God's, or Divine : why should not the time or the days be the time or the days of God, or Divine also? We are far from meaning that the sacred writer could have formed the feeblest conception of the enormous length of the periods of which he was led to speak, as he assuredly had not formed the feeblest conception of the immensity of the works whose formation he recorded. Keeping in view his inspiration, we need not even show cause for believing that in his view the days were of more than ordinary length. As we are told that the prophets did not fully understand their own writings, and had to "search diligently" in order that they might to some extent understand them, so that it was evident that they "ministered" rather to future generations than to their own; in like manner we may safely infer that the sacred author by no means fully comprehended the meaning of his own words, and that whilst ministering sufficiently fully to those who had conceptions of things due to sense rather than to science, and therefore but narrow ideas of the universe, he ministered more abundantly to those who should come long after, and whose knowledge was more in keeping with the real nature and inconceivable vastness of the works of God. Still, we do not mean by this to convey the idea that we at all suppose him to have viewed these Divine days as merely solar or of four and twenty hours; we seem to have abundant evidence to the contrary. Our purpose will be gained if we can prove that these days are not to be regarded as literal, even though from the narrative we may not be able to show that they were conceived to be of any great length. Let them only be admitted to be longer than the ordinary, and then we are called upon to seek the aid

of science rather than of Scripture for the determination of their length.

Still we are not without hope that, from our next argument, it will appear that the sacred writer may have had much larger conceptions of these day-periods than we are apt to suppose. In the meantime, we do well to note that there was a special suitability in the use of the term *day*, in preference to that of any other, because the periods spoken of, whatever their length, were to be employed analogically as types of corresponding *days* of man. If the sabbath institution had related to solar *years* instead of solar *days*, we conceive the sacred author would have been led to speak of the creative periods, not as *days*, but as *years* of God. No supposition then seems more natural than that, as the works are works of God, the days should be days of God, and as the works are great, the days should be long or at least of indefinite length.

2. That such was intended we think we have the clearest and most satisfactory evidence in the fact that at least one of the days of the record, we mean the seventh, must be regarded as of great, if not of measureless, length. Often has the reverse been maintained. Not a few would prefer to interpret the six days as of indefinite length, but have been compelled to interpret otherwise, simply because they could not honestly doubt that, at least the seventh, as apparently identical with the sabbath, must be reckoned a literal or ordinary day. They argued that, as all the days must be of the same character, and as the seventh was literal, the other six must be accounted literal also. Our argument is just the converse, namely, that as the seventh can be satisfactorily proved to be of indefinite length, the others, being as a matter of course of like description, must also be viewed as of indefinite length.

3. What, then, was really intended by the seventh day, or day of Divine creative rest? We would submit the following remarks :—

First. At first sight the day of Divine rest and the day set apart for human rest seem identical,—“And on the seventh day God finished His work which He made, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because in it He rested from all His work which God created and made.” These words seem conclusive of identity. Still, when more carefully considered, they will, we are persuaded, be found to prove the contrary. For

Secondly. If identical, then the day of Divine rest was the very day sanctified. In no real sense, however, could this be the case. If the seven days were ordinary, then Adam and Eve were created on the sixth day of four and twenty hours, and the seventh day of like length, the day of Divine rest and the day set apart for human rest, was the second day, or rather the first full day of Adam's life; so that, on the supposition of identity, the first full day of Adam's life was also the first sabbath day,—that is to say, Adam was to rest on the first day and to work on the following six days,—in fact, was to do, in point of order, the very reverse of the great Divine Worker, and of what is expressly commanded in the law of the sabbath, namely, to rest on the first day and to work on the following six days, instead of working six days and then resting on the seventh.

Thirdly. If the day of Divine rest was that really sanctified, when the one ended the other ended also; the narrative refers to no other day, and thus the keeping of another day, or of a series of other days, must be regarded as really not commanded at all. This is but another way of saying that the day of Divine rest cannot possibly be identified with the day of human rest or seventh-day sabbath, as the former, according to present supposition, was simply one day which soon came to an end, whereas the latter was a long series of days to be observed whilst the sabbath law continued in force.

Fourthly. There must, then, be some reason for this ap-

parent identity and real difference. That reason is very simple, and lies in this, that the writer, in presenting the one as the type of the other, makes use of a not uncommon breviloquence, and thus seemingly speaks as if they were the same. The best example of this which occurs, and which, we think, finely illustrates the point, is that which we find in the words in which Jesus replies to the Jews demanding His authority for His remarkable procedure, usually called the purification of the temple: "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." It was natural for the Jews to identify the temple alluded to by Jesus with the temple before their eyes, and to which their demand related. Unless for the explanation of the evangelist, some would doubtless continue so to identify them. The words referred to may be paraphrased thus,—“Jesus replied to the Jews demanding a sign or proof of His authority, I will do so in My own time and way; namely, when ye destroy this temple, the temple of My body, of which the temple now cleansed is a type, I will raise it, My body, or the temple of My body, in three days: that is to say, when ye have put Me to death, I will give the grand sign of My Messiahship, and therefore of My authority as a Son over the house of God, My Father, and over all that pertains to the house of Israel.” So in the case in hand, we might paraphrase thus,—“And God blessed the sabbath day and sanctified it, or set it apart as a perpetually recurring day of rest for man, who is thus commanded to work six days and to rest on the seventh; because God would require of him to follow His own Divine example, He having rested on the seventh day, the day following the six days on which His works of creation were finished: that is to say, as God worked six days and rested on the seventh, so man is to work six days and to rest on the seventh.”

Thus we are left to judge whether the days of God are, or are not, of the same description as those of man. We have no such notification of the difference of the days as we have

of the difference of the temples ; but we have no more reason for the identification of the former than, apart from the parenthetical note of John, we should have for the identification of the latter. However, we have given more than sufficient proof of the absurdity of treating the days as one and the same. We may here add, that the words of the law of the sabbath or of the fourth commandment, which are often adduced in proof of the like literal character of the days, appear rather most clearly to distinguish between the days in question, and to express the same meaning without the obscurity due to the breviloquence of the record : " For in six days the Lord God made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day : wherefore the Lord God blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." Here the seventh day or day of creative rest is distinguished from the sabbath day, and in no way identified with it,—the sabbath day of man, and not the seventh day of God, being said to have been blessed and hallowed. In fact, if the words of the commandment had been used in the narrative, as they have precisely the same meaning, the argument with which we are dealing, if ever used, might at least have been before now universally abandoned.

Fifthly. That the creative rest was to be reckoned longer than at least an ordinary day might be gathered from the narrative itself. The writer appears to hint that, whilst the seventh day had begun at the close of the creative work described, it had not, at the close of a few hours, come to an end, as, whilst alluding to an evening and a morning in every other instance, he makes no such reference in the case of the seventh day. Further, the whole narrative, as we may show under the form of a separate argument, appears to indicate larger periods than those of literal days, by the way in which the grandeur of the works is set forth, however the almightiness of God may be kept in view.

Again, the simple consideration of what the idea of a Divine

rest of only an ordinary day would really imply seems perfectly sufficient to prove that the sacred writer could not possibly have intended to convey any such idea. How irreverent, not to use a stronger epithet, the very thought of the great Eternal resting a single literal day ! To suppose that it was meant, that on the eighth day He began another work or kind of work, say that of Providence, would be simply absurd. In fact, the idea of ordinary days sets altogether aside the fine analogy intended to be drawn between God's work and rest on the one hand, and man's work and rest on the other. Let the days be long as the works are great, and then the analogy is clear between them and the sum of the successive weeks of human work and rest. Let the reverse be maintained, or let them be literal days, and where the analogy between them and a long continued series of days of work and of rest on the part of man ?

Sixthly. But we are not without Scripture authority for what we thus deem alone reasonable and suitable for the purpose of setting forth the analogy in question. By the Divine rest we are not to understand a mere cessation from work, far less mere rest from toil ; but the Divine complacent delight in the great creation as complete and perfect. This God continues to enjoy. The true view was taken and set forth long before science could affect interpretation by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who says, "There remaineth a rest" (a sabbatism or sabbath-keeping) "for the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His,"—in which we find a rest compared to the creative rest of God. If the former was not only glorious, but long, even eternal, as the scope of the passage implies, why compare it to the latter, the rest of God, if, however glorious, conceived to extend to only one ordinary day ? The inference is, that the writer was led to view the creative rest as still continuing, as very long, nay, as that of the eternal day of Divine satisfaction and delight in the perfection and

glory of the universe. In the light of this inspired interpretation, let us contemplate the record of creation. Let us think of the first six days in keeping with this view of the seventh. Then, not only will the Scripture views of the universe be seen to harmonize generally with those of science, but we shall find that geology alone gives, as its aid is needed to suggest, such a conception of that measureless time during which the great Creator carried on His creative work as can alone correspond with the Scriptural and only rational conception of His creative rest,—a rest not only glorious but eternal.

4. Though thus holding our argument to be conclusive, we might here allude to those instances in which the term day is employed with an indefinite sense. We might refer to one instance which occurs in the next chapter, where the author of the record himself uses the words, "in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens," when he must have meant more than a single day, whatever his meaning in the first chapter. We would not however press this case, as the noun and preposition may be viewed as simply used adverbially. All that we would here suggest is, that before such an adverbial usage could be introduced the term day would seem to have been used in such an indefinite way, as may suffice to show that the indefinite usage implied in our interpretation is by no means unlikely.

5. We may add an argument of decidedly greater force, we mean that already hinted at as based upon the fact that certain parts of the history seem clearly to imply that the sacred historian intended to convey the idea of indefinite periods. For instance, what are we to understand by "the Spirit of God hovering or brooding over the face of the waters"? Those who thus translate must surely admit that the idea of a prolonged, and not of a mere transient state of things, is most naturally conveyed and must have been intended. The reference cannot be supposed to be to a mere part of a natural day.

So the words, "and the earth was without form and void," or "desolate, dreary or empty," cannot for a moment be imagined to represent a state of the earth which lasted no more than a few hours of one short day. A like inference might be drawn from other expressions used. Only by maintaining the exclusion of all natural causes and operations can any one believe the sacred writer to have designedly represented the mighty works of God as really begun and finished in so many natural days.

We shall add only one other illustrative case. We allude to what is said in the second section of the narrative with regard to the parents of the race. We assume the common authority as well as the perfect harmony of the two sections, elsewhere to be fully considered. In the closing paragraph of the first we are simply informed of the creation of man on the sixth day, along with the numerous species of inferior animals. In the second section we are furnished with a variety of particulars, all of which we cannot believe the sacred writer to have represented as having occurred in the course of a few short hours. Thus we must suppose him to have assigned the following to that short time: the creation of Adam, the naming of the animals, the awakening of a sense of solitariness and of the want of suitable companionship on the part of the first man, the deep sleep made to fall upon him and the formation of Eve, the important instructions apparently previously given with respect to the trees of the garden, as also the creation of the animals inhabiting the dry land. It will not do to say that he may have conceived God to do the greatest or the greatest number of works in the shortest possible time. Adam at least required more than a mere portion of a single day to do and to learn what the narrative suggests. Only let the day be of indefinite length, and then all is plain and natural. Let it be of four and twenty hours, or rather of only half that length, and then all is hurried, unnatural, and incredible; injustice is done to the judgment and good sense of the author, viewed as

even uninspired, or we give some colour for doubt of inspiration. In fact, only the supposition of what we think we have amply proved to have been his design, that of using the term day analogically of a lengthened period, can any fit interpretation be given to the entire narrative as a whole, or to its successive statements and varied details.

IX.

I. We have now, we think, given sufficient proof of the correctness of the view taken of the import of the sacred record, and at the same time incidentally removed the main objections usually made. We may here deal with one or two others which yet remain unnoticed. We have found that what has generally been deemed the greatest and most decisive objection is in reality the strongest and best of all proofs. We refer to the case of the undoubted length of the day of creative rest. In close connection with this, an objection, we may say, has often been advanced, on the ground that in the immediate context the word day is employed in the ordinary sense, and that therefore we cannot suppose the writer to have used it in the next sentence in a vastly different sense, and without indicating the slightest change of meaning. This objection is founded on a very simple mistake. Still, even if the word had been thus employed, we find the sacred writer doing this very thing again and again. Thus the entire globe is called "the earth" in both the first and second verses, and then the same word is used in the tenth verse of "the dry land" alone as distinguished from the sea. So again, the word heaven or heavens is used of the atmosphere or aerial firmament alone, and then of the whole firmament of sun, moon, and stars. However, the word day is not used as has been supposed. In the first instance it is employed as the name given to the light, and thus expressly distinguished from night, the name given to the darkness. In the statement relating to the luminaries it is again employed

in this defined and limited sense, in which it really means the day-time, or twelve hours of light, and not a full civil day of four and twenty hours.

In these successive notes of time then, the word is really used in a sense different from that of the express definition, or as having an evening and a morning, and therefore an intervening night. That this is not to be taken literally we shall show. However, it thus clearly appears that the Divine day, whatever its length, is not the same as the day which had just been spoken of, and limited to the time of light. The word then being thus actually employed in a different sense, we cannot regard the further objection, based on the vastness of the difference implied in the supposition of an enormous period, as of any real weight. The like immense difference obtains between the application of the word heaven to the mere aerial firmament, on the one hand, and to the glorious firmament of sun, moon, and stars, on the other. A similar remarkable transition is made in the statement regarding the creative rest of God and the weekly rest of man. In using the term day analogically, and therefore more appropriately than any other term, the sacred writer makes no unnatural or unlikely transition. A certain amount of obscurity in such a case was unavoidable; and if we remember that the record was intended for all ages, before and after the rise of modern science, such obscurity will appear also most proper.

2. The very employment of the words, "evening and morning," has been deemed sufficient proof that ordinary days were intended. We have already said what ought to suffice for the full and satisfactory removal of this objection, namely, that if the week of creative work and rest was to be spoken of analogically, as typical of the week of human work and rest, the sacred writer could not more fitly describe the days of the former than in terms descriptive of the days of the latter; that is to say, in terms descriptive of ordinary days with

their evenings and mornings. This holds good whatever the length supposed, whether extending only to six thousand years, as in the case of the Etruscan cosmogony, or to such enormous periods as geology has demonstratively indicated. We need hardly add, that, as a matter of course, it would be absurd to suppose any part or parts of the Divine days really corresponding to any part or parts of those ordinary days, whose mere name they analogically bear.

However, we may add, that we are not without Scripture example of a day of long continuance being represented as at least having an evening. We do not refer to such figurative usage as that of "the day of salvation," and the like. We allude to what is called expressly "*one day*," and which is not only said to have an "evening," but is also spoken of as including ordinary years. In Zech. xiv. 6-9, we have these words: "And it shall come to pass in that day" (the time just spoken of) "that the light shall not be clear nor dark;" (or, as the words may rather be rendered, "there will not be light, the glorious ones will withdraw themselves;" and therefore no day or time of mere natural light, whether of the sun or of the moon or of the stars,) "but it shall be one day" (one of special character). "It shall be known to the Lord" (its peculiar nature shall be known to Jehovah); "not day and not night" (not made up of mere day and night, no ordinary day or series of ordinary days). "And it will come to pass, at the time of evening there shall be light" (this long day then has its evening, when instead of darkness there shall be light, that kind of light which was to distinguish that peculiar day). "And it shall be in that day that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea, and half of them to the western sea, in summer and in winter shall it be" (the day thus including years). "And Jehovah shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Jehovah, and His name one."

Here then, we find a lengthened period of special Divine

operation and human illumination, not made up of ordinary days, yet continuing through many ordinary years, spoken of as a day, and being called by that name, so far described in terms of a day as having an evening; and if an evening, just as well a morning, provided there had been occasion to speak of one. This day is not to be viewed as figurative, and therefore different from that of the record. Though prophetically revealed, and thus so far figuratively described, it is a real day or period, with its fixed beginning and end. Not only, therefore, does it furnish an example of the use of the term evening in the case of a long day-period, sufficient to remove the objection in question, but it does so in such a striking way as might have suggested its employment as a separate illustration of the Scripture use of the word, and thus as a positive proof of the correctness of our interpretation.

3. We have already anticipated our reply to a further objection based on the reference to evening and morning. It might be objected, that this reference at least implies that each day was conceived by the writer to have been ended before the next began, and thus would seem to disprove the correctness of an important, nay, an essential, part of our theory, namely, that the days, like the works, are not to be regarded as strictly speaking successive. However, as already observed, in the case of a day when spoken of analogically or typically, those parts of the description which really belong only to the description of an ordinary day are certainly to be taken into no positive account. Thus the evening of the prophetic day just used in illustration cannot be accounted a real part of that day; the entire meaning is this, that there would be light throughout the whole day or whole period referred to. So in the case before us, the words employed imply no more than would have been indicated by the use of the shorter expressions, "there was *one* day, there was a *second* day," and so on; we being left to gather whether each day ended before the next began, or

whether, as we have found, the six days might be viewed as extending, like the different kinds of work, indifferently over more or less of the entire creative period.

4. The only other objection to which we now need refer is one which may possibly occur in relation to the sixfold division of the entire work of creation. It may be said, that if that division is to be associated with a sixfold division of the time used, we might at least expect some approach to equality of division; whereas, we find the countless number of the heavenly bodies grouped together under one day, whilst under other days are placed works comparatively most insignificant. As a matter of fact this is true. Still, *first*, we are to remember that the entire description is that of the apparent rather than of the real universe; *secondly*, the idea of the almightiness of the great Creator would naturally set aside that of the sixfold division at all implying equality of division; *thirdly*, to require even an approach to equality in the case of a mere analogy would be to show misconception of the very nature of such analogy or of all such typical representation; and, *lastly*, such equality was by no means demanded by the design of the writer. He does not set forth a basis on which to raise an institution according to which man was required to labour equally throughout the entire six days of every week; so that there was no necessity to indicate that God had done about the same amount of work on each of the day-periods spoken of. We may, then, fairly regard this apparently formidable objection as of no real weight.

X.

1. We have now, we think, laid down the principles according to which this important portion of Scripture may be interpreted in perfect harmony with modern science, and have at the same time dealt with all the objections which seem per-

tinent or of force. We may here take a rapid glance at the whole, and make some brief use of the leading results in a review of our general interpretation.

2. The conclusions which, we think, may be fairly drawn from the careful study of the design, scope, and structure of the narrative of universal creation, may be summed up in the following manner:—

First. That the sacred writer has not given, and did not intend to give, a scientific account of that great work.

Secondly. That, in keeping with this, he has carefully avoided all reference to those physical laws and operations which it is the proper part of science to study, to discover, and to disclose.

Thirdly. That he has thus so divided that vast work into general departments, and given such descriptions of them, as to show this absence of scientific reference on the one hand, and as to enable him to represent the whole without introducing, or rather, in a way successfully excluding, the idea of that temporal succession, which has been so often erroneously and injuriously inferred from his words, and which too, like the laws and operations just alluded to, it belongs exclusively to science to determine.

Fourthly. This appears the more evidently to have been designed as well as done, by the still further arrangement of these departments of work in an order which must be viewed as palpably artificial and not scientific, resembling that of a mere general account of some such work as that of the erection of a temple, palace, or ordinary house.

Fifthly. That this kind of order (the order of the description as distinguished from the order of the production or development of the works described), is still more decidedly marked by those successive notes of time, which, in our English version appear so clearly to indicate temporal succession, but which in the Hebrew text may be seen still more clearly to

unite with the mode of division and of arrangement just referred to in proving that no such temporal succession was at all intended.

Sixthly. As thus no physical or temporal order has been indicated by these notes of time, these peculiar allusions to the creative days, so we have proved that these days or day-periods may be so regarded as of indefinite length as to leave the mind perfectly free to accept the interpretation which geology alone can help us to put upon them, and to welcome the sublimest conceptions which science can legitimately convey, whether of the vastness of the universe or of the antiquity of our globe; assured, as we have found, that the longer the creative days and the grander the creative works, the more truly do both harmonize with the length and the grandeur of the creative rest.

Seventhly. The sacred writer seems most evidently to have been led to give this special and remarkable form to his narrative, the imperfect consideration of which has involved its interpretation in so many difficulties, in order that he might present a suitable basis in the Divine example as to work and rest for the law of the sabbath or command with respect to human work and rest; thus giving still further, we might say, absolutely certain proof of the sixfold division of the Divine work and of the time of Divine working, as well as of the entire arrangement alluded to, being justly traceable rather to perfect Divine art than to imperfect human science, and therefore like decided proof of the correctness of the view given of the nature of the order of the narrative.

Lastly. Whilst all this may be positively affirmed, and whilst the sacred record may thus appear of wonderful construction on the one hand, and of remarkable suitability to all ages on the other, we may add one more conclusion, namely, that the narrative, trace it to whatever origin we may, can at least be proved absolutely free from all the errors of the imperfect science of early times, nay, from physical error of every kind.

3. To some extent the truth of this last observation may be tested by the following closing review of our general interpretation. We have already endeavoured to show that perhaps the greatest of all the difficulties which occur to the interpreter may be satisfactorily removed by the simple application of our central principle with respect to the true order of the narrative,—we mean that due to the seemingly incorrect statements regarding the light and the luminaries.

We have again and again stated, that the record was intended for all time, the entire future as well as the entire past. Up to a comparatively recent date no objection of any consequence could have been suggested. We think we have indicated principles, by the proper use of which the difficulties now often felt may be removed. Not only do we regard the narrative as consistent with modern science, but, because of its very nature, we are assured that it can never be proved in any way inconsistent with the true science of the future. We feel the more deeply convinced of this, because, whilst we cannot so much as imagine the science of the future less in accordance with it than is the theory of evolution or of natural development at present held by so many, we believe that the section now under consideration may be proved by no means inconsistent even with that theory, provided only the entire creative work be traced to the hand of God. We do not here refer to the detailed account of the formation of Adam and Eve in the second section. As we have often stated, God is simply said to have created all things. How far He acted according to natural law, or how far He acted directly or indirectly in the exercise of His own omnipotence or through the intervention of physical causation, we are not informed.

No theist, whatever his scientific or speculative ideas, could object to the sublime announcement of universal creation contained in the first verse. Now the subsequent verses really do no more than state in detail what we find thus comprehensively announced. Nor could any just exception be taken to those

words which relate to the early condition of the earth, or to the Divine energy said to influence the dark abyss, and, as we may suppose, to affect the whole framework of creation. We have said enough with respect to the light and the luminaries. But, it may be asked, what of the works connected with the remaining creative periods? Are they not spoken of in a way inconsistent with demonstrated fact? By no means. We need not repeat, that the order of the narrative is very far from implying that they must be viewed as completed during so many successive periods. If the land animals had been said to have been created after the whole vegetable kingdom, the case would have been different. We have found, however, from the manner in which the creative days are introduced, and especially in which the Hebrew article is used, that the record leaves us free to determine the order of production or of development by the aid of science alone. But, it may be asked, what of the first introduction of life, vegetable or animal? Even those who accept the theory of evolution decidedly differ as to this. However, let God only be the grand agent, as every theist holds, and then the terms of the narrative cannot be proved inconsistent with any view, however extreme. God is simply said to command, whilst the result is as simply said to follow, but in what way, whether with or without direct creative energy, we are not told. To discover, therefore, the real force of the words used, we must have recourse to science, or, if to Scripture, at least to what lies beyond the limits of the section under consideration.

Is it still asked, What of the last and greatest of all the works recorded, the creation of man himself? Why, even here we are simply told that he was created in the likeness of God; but we are certainly not informed as to whether, in his creation, God was pleased to act directly, or whether He was pleased to make use of any subordinate instrumentality. We may otherwise or elsewhere have abundant evidence as to this point. We only say that here Scripture is perfectly silent with respect to it. If, then, this section may thus be seen to consist with

any scientific view so extreme as that referred to, we may well conclude, that the more we become acquainted with the constitution of the world and with the order of its development, the more fully shall we be satisfied with the correctness of this most ancient record of creation, and the more clearly shall we perceive its fitness for the place which it occupies in the volume of revelation.

Chapter II.

EXPOSITION OF THE FIRST SECTION.

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Ch. i. 1. to Ch. ii. 3.

Ch. i. 1. In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth.

2. And the earth was waste and desolate ; and darkness (was) upon the face of the deep ; and the Spirit of God (was) hovering over the face of the waters.

3. And God said, Let there be Light ; and there was light.

4. And God saw the light, that (it was) good ; and God divided between the light and the darkness. 5. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night.

And there was evening, and there was morning—one day.

6. And God said, Let there be an Expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it be a division between the waters and the waters. 7. And God made the expanse, and divided between the waters under the expanse and the waters above the expanse : and it was so. 8. And God called the expanse Heaven.

And there was evening, and there was morning—a second day.

9. And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered to one place, and let the dry (land) appear : and it was so.

10. And God called the dry (land) Earth ; and the gathering of the waters He called Seas : and God saw that (it was) good.

11. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind, whose seed (is) in itself, upon the earth : and it was so. 12. And the earth brought forth grass, the herb yielding seed after its kind,

and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed (is) in itself, after its kind: and God saw that (it was) good.

13. And there was evening, and there was morning—a third day.

14. And God said, Let there be Luminaries in the expanse of the heaven, to divide between the day and the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years.

15. And let them be for luminaries in the expanse of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so. 16. And God made the two great Luminaries,—the greater luminary to rule the day, and the lesser luminary to rule the night,—and the Stars. 17. And God set them in the expanse of the heaven to give light upon the earth. 18. And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide between the light and the darkness: and God saw that (it was) good.

19. And there was evening, and there was morning—a fourth day.

20. And God said, Let the waters teem with the moving creature that has life; and let fowl fly above the earth before the face of the expanse of heaven. 21. And God created great monsters, and every living thing that moveth, with which the waters teem, after their kind, and every winged fowl after its kind: and God saw that (it was) good. 22. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let the fowl multiply in the earth.

23. And there was evening, and there was morning—a fifth day.

24. And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after its kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after its kind: and it was so. 25. And God made the beast of the earth after its kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth (on) the ground after its kind: and God saw that (it was) good.

26. And God said, Let us make Man in Our image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the

sea, and over the fowl of the heaven, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27. And God created man in His image, in the image of God created He him: male and female created He them. 28. And God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the heaven, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 29. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which (is) upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which (is) the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food. 30. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the heaven, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein (there is) life (I have given), every green herb for food: and it was so. 31. And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold (it was), very good.

And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

Ch. ii. 1. And the Heavens and the Earth were finished, and all their Host. 2. And on the seventh day God finished His work which He made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He made. 3. And God blessed the Seventh day, and sanctified it; because on it He rested from all His work which God created and made.

I.

“In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth.”

1. As the first of a Divine revelation, we can conceive no sentence more appropriate, more precious or more sublime than this, in which the sacred writer sets forth, in few words, yet most vividly, the entire creative work of the eternal and ever-blessed God. We were wont, with many others, to re-

gard it as referring to that point in the flow of eternal duration at which time might be said to have begun, or at which the whole elementary substance of which the material universe was afterwards framed was brought into being. The subsequent verses of the chapter were thus viewed as giving a more detailed, yet very general, account of those Divine operations by which that substance, diffused through measureless space, was, in the course of countless ages, transformed into the heavens and the earth as they now exist. We now think, however, that both here and in the first and fourth verses of the second chapter, reference is made to the whole Divine work, from the first creative act to the last recorded exercise of Almighty power in the formation of the first parents of our race.

2. To be satisfied as to this, we have only to turn to these two verses. The one simply states the fact, that the whole creative work was completed: "Thus" or "And the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their host." These are evidently the same heavens and earth of which an account had just been given, "the heavens and earth" of the first sentence. The addition, "and their host," clearly indicates that they are alluded to, not as existing in their constituent elements, but as finally framed and fully furnished. The second case is perhaps still more conclusive: "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created," or "in their being created," or "when they were (being) created," or "when they were in course of creation." Here we have an evident allusion to chapter i. 1. The heavens and the earth, which are there simply said to have been created, are here spoken of as progressively developed or created; and then, in the words which follow, reference is expressly made to a period in the course of this progressive work of creation, and that at the same time a period in the course of the creative work described in the first chapter; thus clearly

proving the work of the first verse is just the work of the whole of that chapter. In this way we are furnished with an invincible argument against the theory of interpretation which is built upon the supposition that in the first verse we are told of the creation of the heavens and of the earth, as they existed in a state of perfect cosmical development before the creation of man and of the present vegetable and animal kingdoms, whilst the second verse refers to some vast catastrophe by which that beautiful and perfect earth was reduced to a state of wasteness and desolation. The words of chapter ii. 4, 5, in pointing to a time in the course of the one creative work when the vegetable kingdom was not yet perfected, clearly prove that the creation of the first verse was identically the same as that of the eleventh and twelfth verses of the first chapter, or rather was inclusive of it; and therefore the idea of the supposed catastrophe is excluded, and the whole basis of the theory removed. As science has really demolished this theory, it is well thus to notice that the sacred writer has done what might have sufficed to overthrow it long ago. The geologist overthrows it, by simply proving that species still exist which can be proved to have existed before the period at which they are supposed to have been destroyed. The sacred writer, from the very first, provided the means of its overthrow, by doing virtually the same thing,—by declaring in the second chapter that the production of the vegetable kingdom, which took place after the earth was waste and empty, was included in the work of creating the earth spoken of in the first sublime and all-inclusive announcement.

We might have said at the outset, that it does not appear to be at all in keeping with Hebrew or Scripture idiom to use the expression, “the heavens and the earth,” in reference to the more material elements of nature, but rather as equivalent to our one word, “Universe.” Besides, to suppose a direct reference to these mere constituent principles would be to suppose such an introduction of the physical or scientific element as

seems perfectly foreign to the nature and scope of the entire narrative. We do not say, that the words can be fully understood apart from the idea of primary elementary creation. We hold that they simply announce the fact of universal creation, not as a mere initial and preparatory work, but as a complete work from beginning to end.

3. This leads us to inquire as to the force of the verb, *create*, here used, or as to the sense in which God is here said to have created the universe. If we had taken the verse to allude to the constituent elements, and not to the universe itself, then we must have inferred that creation in the most absolute sense was intended. Regarding, however, the whole formative work as at least involved, we are led to ask, Do the words imply more, or that the universe was created, not in the mere relative sense of being constructed of pre-existing, and therefore of eternally-existing matter, but also in the absolute and all-inclusive sense of being brought as really into existence as into form by the hand of God? The mere use of the verb cannot determine, as it is certainly often employed, and that more than once in this chapter, in the less absolute sense. If we had any sufficient reason to look upon matter as self-existing and eternal, to think with some that absolute creation involved a contradiction, and therefore an impossibility, or to conclude that Scripture did not elsewhere so speak as to convey the idea of creation in the highest sense, though the natural import of the verse might appear to involve more, we might yet regard the verb as necessarily implying no more than the formative work. However, all things considered, we seem to gain nothing and to lose much, by supposing anything short of an absolutely creative work. All who believe in the immateriality of the human soul or spirit can believe in nothing less in the case of at least one work recorded in this chapter. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews appears to have interpreted the words in question in the highest sense:

“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God: so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” Here the verb, *create*, is not employed, nor is the very objectionable definition of creation given,—we mean that of “making out of nothing”; yet the writer so expresses himself as to convey the highest idea of creation in the simplest and most unexceptionable manner, “the things which are seen,”—the visible universe,—were framed or constituted by the word or power of God, and yet “were not made of things which do appear,” that is to say, of pre-existing substances, else these would now appear in the things—worlds or whatever else framed or constituted of them; as, for example, in the table, which we may now see before us, appears the wood of which it was formed; or, to take the case of visible bodies formed of invisible substances, say, water formed of its constituent gases, in the water, which we now see, appear the gases of which it is composed, though they may not appear to the eye in their elementary state. In favour of this interpretation, three things may be noted,—*first*, that the writer does not say that *visible* things were made or framed of *invisible*, as some suppose, and as some have virtually translated; *secondly*, the peculiar position of the negative particle in the sentence cannot well be accounted for unless as supporting the view in question; and, *thirdly*, the fact, that the creative act referred to is presented as an article of faith, seems to necessitate the same conclusion.

Again, whatever the force of the expression, “in the beginning,” when taken in connection with the words which follow, it does appear to suggest the full idea of an antecedent time, or rather of an antecedent eternity, in which there was no existence whatever save that of the one absolute and eternal Being, and also of that special time, whose length is not indicated, during which the entire creative work was begun and finished.

Further, we may add, that we seem to have some proof of

the same thing in the form of words used at the close of this section, "because that in it He had rested from all the work which God created and made," words which, if correctly rendering the Hebrew, would undoubtedly suggest no less truly the creation of the material than the construction of the works. However, we keep by a more exact, or at least a more literal translation, "because that in it He had rested from all the work which God created in making or to make," a Hebrew idiom, it is said, implying no more than the one act or work of simply making. One or two instances may be adduced, which, however, seem rather to support the view which we have been giving: Joel ii. 21, "The Lord will do great things," or, "The Lord will do great things in doing,—in doing He will do more than merely do something, He will do great things"; 1 Kings xiv. 9: "But thou hast done evil," or, "But thou hast done evil in doing,—in doing thou hast done more than merely done something, thou hast done evil." Even the simple expression, "He spake, saying," which might seem to prove the reverse, is of like force. Gesenius would say, the former is used absolutely, while the latter is followed by the words spoken. It is thus implied, not only that the words were in some way conveyed, but that they were spoken. In like manner in the case before us, "which God created and made," or "which in making God created,—God did more than simply make, He created." In all these cases, the two verbs employed are not of exactly the same meaning. But what more or what else can *create* mean than *make*, unless it involves all that any one can contend for, a real and absolute creation? It may be said of course of anything created that it was made, and of many things merely made that they were created. But when the two verbs are combined as in the case in hand, the distinctive meaning of each, and not the common meaning of both, seems to be implied. At the same time, we would not put more weight on this argument than it may be supposed most fairly to bear.

We may add, that, apart from what does seem contrary to reason, namely, the proper eternity or absolute independence of matter, when we contemplate the whole world of mind, the dependent spiritual universe, and when we consider the whole scope and apparent testimony of Scripture, we seem constrained to infer, that, whatever the force of the verb elsewhere, it was here intended to convey, with respect to the entire Divine work described, the idea of a real or absolute creation. We cannot here introduce any discussion as to the great and difficult question thus suggested. The simple conception of the nature of an act of creation is certainly beyond the capacity of the human mind, nay, we may safely say, of any created mind. Whilst we cannot agree with many in regarding it as impossible or as involving contradiction, we agree with them in viewing it as what they would call "un-thinkable," or as being what we have virtually called it, inconceivable by us. Undoubtedly, absolute creation has been regarded by very many in ancient as well as in modern times, in the east as well as in the west, as simply impossible. In fact, we have long considered ourselves indebted to the Bible alone for the belief now so widely diffused as to such creation. The maxim, "Out of nothing, nothing can come," long ruled the more reflective minds. In one sense it is mathematically true. The too common definition of creation, "the making of something out of nothing," doubtless tended to support, in the west, the idea of the eternity of matter, and, in the east, the doctrine of emanation. We would rather speak of it as the act of bringing into existence or being, and therefore the work of infinite power or of God alone. We may safely say, that it will be found as easy to prove that Scripture does not contain an indisputable affirmation of the fact of what we have called absolute creation, as to prove that the legitimate exercise of reason leads to the indisputable denial of the possibility of such creation ; in other words, no one need reject the testimony of Scripture on the ground of its un-

doubted affirmation of what we may deem impossible, namely, creation, as he may just as well conclude that the Bible does not give an absolutely certain sound as to the point as believe that an act of creation is beyond the power of even an almighty Being.

However, apart from all metaphysical argument, we may here allude to certain evidence of the dependence of matter on mind for its existence and nature, such as that suggested by the distinctive character and properties of the simple elementary substances, which we cannot, even in thought, separate from their very existence, and which so wonderfully fit them for the most varied and useful combination on the one hand, and for their place in the economy of the world on the other. Admitting the possibility of future analysis, and not forgetful of the further possibility of present speculations becoming future beliefs, we still cling to the idea of really different kinds of matter, endowed with different qualities, and existing in different proportions, fitting them for their varied uses, and thus proving them to be no necessarily, far less accidentally, existing substances, but substances whose wonderful constitution must be traced to a Cause of infinite intelligence as well as of infinite power. Impossible, therefore, as may appear to our minds the creation of an atom, as of a world or of the universe, we must not forget that there is an essential difference between an act of such a nature being above reason and being contrary to reason, nor should we venture to limit the operations of almighty Power by those conceptions of possibility which are within reach of our own limited capacity. To all this, indeed, it may be replied in such words as those of Professor Tyndall, in his valuable treatise on heat, that "Nature is a constant quantity, and the utmost man can do in the pursuit of physical truth, or in the applications of physical knowledge, is to shift the constituents of the never-varying total, sacrificing one if he would produce another. The law of conservation rigidly excludes both creation

and annihilation." This is perfectly true, or rather a simple truism, provided we suppose "nature" to be, not so much "a constant quantity" as the sum of all being, the total of all "quantity." Especially will it appear to be a mere truism, if we regard matter as alone existing, as matter cannot possibly be supposed capable of either self-creation or self-annihilation. But, admitting the existence of a God of infinite power, we cannot view nature as so absolutely unalterable or the law of conservation as so absolutely exclusive, unless we are prepared to maintain that God never can, or at least never does, create, modify or annihilate force or substance of any kind; in fact, unless we assume the thing to be proved, namely, that creation is impossible.

4. We may now consider the import of the expression, "In the beginning." The view taken of the words, "the heavens and the earth," implies that the entire period of creation, from first to last, is referred to. Viewed as comprising the vast cycles of geology, that may seem unlikely. More closely considered, it will appear most suitable as well as correct. To those of earlier times all would be appropriate, as they could have had no idea of the time involved. To those on whose minds that idea has dawned, the thought of the vast period of development will not seem at all disproportionate to that of the still vaster period—may we not say, the eternity?—of the existence of the work developed or thus begun, the created universe. In relation to ourselves, "looking before and after," up to the time of the creation of our race all things are, by no means unnaturally, contemplated as in course of development or as simply in their beginning. In all cases, in fact, we are wont to regard the whole period of construction, at least up to the time of fitness for the intended use, as simply preparatory, or as simply the beginning, whether we think of the great temple alluded to, or of some temple or palace reared by human hands. Though thus considering the expression by no means

inapt, we may say that, should any think otherwise, they may substitute the rendering which has been learnedly maintained, "in ancient times," "in antiquities," "of old," or the like. Be this as it may, we cannot but view the reference of the expression to the entire creative work as sufficiently evident.

This we think finely supported and illustrated in the beautiful parallel passage which forms the opening of the Gospel of John : "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him ; and without Him was not anything made that was made." There is a deeper analogy between the two portions of Scripture than at first sight appears. "In the beginning was the Word," seems to refer more naturally to a period than to a mere point in the flow of time ; implying of course that He, who existed throughout the entire period, existed also throughout the past eternity, and was thus uncreated and Divine. This is more fully indicated by the words which follow, "and the Word was with God," nay, "and the Word was God." The Word was so with God as to be God. "The same was in the beginning with God,"—words which we cannot regard as a mere repetition added by way of emphasis, but which seem rather intended to prepare for what follows. The same was not *one only in being*, but *one in operation*, with the eternal God, throughout the whole period of universal creation ; and hence in keeping with this it is immediately added, "all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." "The beginning" thus seems, in the view of the apostle, to include the whole period in which the "all things" alluded to "were made" by the eternal Word.

5. We may here, in passing, notice a grammatical objection to the view above given. If the first verse be thus held to announce the entire work described in the first chapter, it is then, it is said, to be viewed in the light of a mere heading or

superscription, so that the real history must be supposed to begin with the second verse ; which is simply impossible, as that verse begins, as no history can begin, with the conjunction "and." However, though set forth by more than one man of just repute, we cannot but regard the criticism as proceeding on a simple mistake. Though relating to the entire work, the first verse is no mere superscription, but an essential and most appropriate part of the history. We may best indicate our meaning, and at the same time show the real force of the conjunctive particle, by paraphrasing briefly thus : "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, carrying on His work from first to last, and, in the course of that work, so it was that the earth was in a state of partial or imperfect formation." All grammatical difficulty seems thus fairly excluded.

6. We think we may now justly regard this short and sublime sentence as relating to the entire created universe, and thus as fitted to suggest a great amount of spiritual as well as physical truth. Under covert of these few and simple words are hidden all the treasures of science, philosophy, and natural theology.

First. We may remark that here we have no formal argument for the being of God. The great inscrutable mystery of the Divine existence is rather suggested than announced, and left to be accepted by faith rather than to be comprehended by reason. It must ever remain a mystery to all created and limited minds. The great visible temple is presented to our view. The great God, we are assured, is here ; but we cannot see Him, and never shall, for He is invisible. If we have eyes to see, we may behold on every stone the inscription of the Sacred name. Are any perplexed as to the origin of the mighty fabric ? Is reason itself under a cloud in the presence of the great mystery ? Here we find the key to the whole secret of the universe presented, in the one word, GOD, to the hand of

faith,—“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” As we found it wisely said elsewhere,—“through faith we understand.” Yes, through Divine faith human reason rises out of darkness, and begins to move in a sphere of light. In one sense the mystery is solved, whilst in another it must ever remain.

Secondly. We may put this in a somewhat different light. We may be said to have here presented to our minds not only the created, but also the Uncreated, Universe, with the absolute dependence of the former on the latter, for its origin, its order, its perfection, and its continued existence. The Divine Being is said to originate all worlds, and therefore to exist before them and to be independent of them. He is represented, in fact, as distinct from all material existence, the infinite and absolute One, from whose all-good, all-wise, and almighty Will, all things have sprung, and therefore who possesses a real, though mysterious Personality, without believing in which we cannot possibly love Him in the present world or trust in Him for a world to come. In this way, by this one mighty saying, every form of Atheism, Pantheism, and Polytheism is denied and set aside. Thus here and in the following verses, at a very early date, all manner of idolatry, all deification of the elements, of the heavenly bodies, of the living forms of nature, we find virtually condemned as false and deceptive. How the spiritual darkness of India and China, of Greece and Rome, of the mass of mankind, is made “visible” by the clear light of this first sentence of the Bible! Even amidst the dazzling light of modern discovery, apart from that sentence or some equivalent to it, a darkness still rests on the origin of things as great as that which, we are told, once rested upon the mighty deep. In order to a calm faith, a clear reason, a loving and joyous and hopeful life, we now need, as much as in any previous age, to walk in the light of this “true and faithful saying,” “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

Thirdly. On the great fact here announced may be said to

rest, as on a sure and everlasting foundation, the claims of God to the perfect loving obedience of all His intelligent creatures, or, to put the matter in another form, the obligation of all His intelligent creatures perfectly to love and obey Him. He is the Creator, and therefore Lord of all. The Universe is His creation, and therefore His Kingdom. In this way, the first and greatest Divine announcement, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," forms the self-evidently righteous basis for the first and greatest moral law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength."

Fourthly. It may be remarked, that the order of the words, "the heavens and the earth," not "the earth and the heavens," seems to indicate that the heavens were not conceived by the sacred writer, as many suppose, to be comparatively insignificant and thoroughly subordinate to the earth. He appears rather to show the same state of mind as that which expressed itself in the sublime words, "When I consider the heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained : what is man that Thou art mindful of him ? and the son of man that Thou visitest him ?" Doubtless he knew enough of the grandeur of creation to enable him to breathe the spirit of the words so finely put into the lips of our first parents,—

"These are Thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty ! Thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair : Thyself how wondrous then !
Unspeakable, who sit'st above these heavens,
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these Thy lowest works ; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power Divine."

Fifthly. We may add one other remark, that, though "the heaven of heavens," the peculiar Scripture abode of God and angels, and eventually of the redeemed, is, doubtless wisely, in no way expressly alluded to in this chapter, we know that the idea of such a region was familiar to the Israelitish mind long

before this book was written ; so that we may freely infer, that we were designedly left to regard it as a portion, though an invisible and unknown portion, of the created universe. This we may keep in view, whilst at the same time holding that our narrative alludes expressly and seemingly exclusively to the visible universe.

II.

“And the earth was waste and desolate ; and darkness (was) upon the face of the deep ; and the Spirit of God (was) hovering over the face of the waters.”

1. The first verse, we have found, relates to the entire creative work from beginning to end. The order of the words, “the heavens and the earth,” we regarded as indicating the sacred writer’s view of the relative vastness and superiority of the former. Here he at once passes on to treat of this lower and inferior world, as being that with which it is his main purpose to deal, and as if to show thus early what we know to be a matter of fact, that he intended to view all things rather as mutually related than as actually existing, and therefore to speak of the heavens afterwards and only as they could be made to appear subservient to the interests of the earth and of man. This prior treatment, then, is very far from being designed to indicate prior existence. As already implied, further reference to the heavenly bodies will depend, not on the time of their creation, but on the way in which such reference may best suit the nature and the form of the record.

Let us suppose a very simple alteration, neither elegant nor needful, but certainly allowable, “In the beginning God created the heavens, and in the same beginning He also created the earth,” and then perhaps we may the more vividly realise the idea of the sacred author’s order of treatment. The two clauses would indicate nothing as to the order of development. The heavens might have been created in whole or in part before or after or along with the earth. Only let us keep in mind

the simple fact, that when he wrote the second sentence, in which he begins the separate treatment of the earth, the idea of the heavens as a fully finished work was present to his mind, ready, as it were, to be introduced or hinted at, as above remarked, wherever it might best serve the author's purpose. The correctness of what we have elsewhere advanced with respect to his knowledge of the existence of the luminaries at as early a date as that of the recorded creation, or at least introduction of light, is here assumed.

2. Let us now connect the second clause of the first verse, as above altered, with the second verse, "In the beginning God created the earth, not the mere substances of which it is composed, but itself as a finished result of His entire work from first to last; and, at some unrevealed stage of that progressive work, the earth was waste and desolate." In this way, we can clearly see the connection between the two verses, and as clearly perceive that there is no real inconsistency in first alluding to the whole work from beginning to end, and then returning to as early a point in the history of the earth's development as it seemed well to fix upon as that at which the subsequent detailed account might best begin. This is just what, we feel fully assured, the sacred writer has done. The Hebrew idiom decidedly favours this idea. The noun is put first, and the verb in the past tense next, as they would properly be if the writer intended to indicate either a new beginning in the narrative or the idea of the state or condition of the subject, here of course the earth. He does both. If he had designed to express the idea of change, rather than of state, as the upholders of one theory maintain, he would have put the verb in the future tense first and the nominative next; and, in this case, the words might have been fairly rendered, "And the earth became waste and desolate;" implying, according to the theory referred to, that the beautiful and perfect earth of the first verse had thus, through some terrible catastrophe, become

the waste and desolate earth of the second. We have already said that geology does not support this theory, and that the reference to the vegetable kingdom at the opening of the second section is opposed to it; and now we add that the form of the first clause of the second verse seems also subversive of it. We regard the sacred writer, then, as simply pointing back to a certain state or condition of the earth, which he describes as that of wasteness and emptiness and desolation.

3. What shall we say of this period of our world's history? So far as the words or expressions here used are concerned, we may say, that they convey or suggest absolutely no idea as to whether such was the state in which it was directly created, or whether that state was the result of physical changes, more or less numerous, and carried on through longer or shorter time, subsequent to that of the first creative act. Whatever truth we may discover with regard to this, we must learn from verified science rather than from this or any other part of Scripture. We may safely say, that we are here carried back as far as Sir Charles Lyell has said geology, strictly so-called, carries us back in the physical history of the globe. We must have recourse to the evidences and arguments of astronomy, to those discussions which pertain to the development of the solar system, to what may be justly argued for or against the theory of a gradual development from a state of a primary gaseous existence, through the many and mighty processes of consolidation and arrangement, to that of final organisation. Assuming the general correctness of this theory, we find absolutely nothing in these two opening sentences which would prevent the full belief that, between the first creative act and the period of wasteness spoken of, there intervened as many cycles, not to say ages, as science or even scientific speculation may demand. As the theory referred to supposes the solid earth to have been once in a state of incandescence, and thus not always the dark body here described, we must conclude that that state of fusion

had long passed away, that, as we have elsewhere said, "the deep" spoken of rested upon a crust of solid rock, and that, instead of the pure and perfect atmosphere afterwards alluded to, there rose an atmosphere of commingled vapours sufficient to account for the "darkness" of the next clause, without at all implying the yet non-existence of the great source of terrestrial light.

Be what we may call the Pre-Geological History of the earth what it may, we should at least remark that this second verse is very far from suggesting the idea of a real Chaos, especially of such a chaos as distinguishes the various forms of ancient heathen cosmogony. Whilst we are carried sufficiently far back for the purpose of the record, we are to regard the earth, especially if originally in a gaseous form, as in a state of considerably advanced formation. We need not suppose the ocean absolutely universal. In the case of expressions of necessity so general and so comprehensive, we must maintain a certain freedom if we would secure a real correctness of interpretation.

4. We need hardly refer to the strange idea which still finds favour with certain of the learned, that the state of the earth here described is one, not of mere imperfect formation and of necessity implied as a stage in the all but endless progress of the terrestrial matter from its perfectly elementary to its perfectly organised condition, but of terrible universal ruin in which the fair earth of the first verse was involved, both directly and indirectly, by the Fallen Angels. As a general theory, we have more than once said, that, whatever the earlier geologists may have thought, it is not now sustained by the facts of geology. We have seen, too, that it is not supported by the mode of expression here used, nor by the introductory portion of the second section. We may say positively that the entire facts of geology point to no such fair earth as is thus supposed to have existed before the human era, and whose ruins are thus sup-

posed to be sublimely described. The entire geological history is one of countless stages, with, indeed, many a local retrogression, and with many an apparently destructive as well as comparatively immense catastrophe, but as a whole, of constant, uninterrupted, and unchecked advancement. The illustration from Jeremiah's description of desolation, in which he borrows the sublime words of this verse, is by no means of real force, as nothing could be more appropriate than the quotation of words so wonderfully descriptive of the earth before it was Divinely finished and furnished to describe some great work of Divine judicial desolation.

Nor is the argument of greater force, that the state here alluded to cannot be at all regarded as the work of God. We may give it in the words of the Bishop of Lincoln. "It is distinctly asserted in Holy Scripture that God did not make the earth to be without form and void, *thohū* (Isa. xlv. 18); as the son of Sirach says (Ecclus. xlii. 24), God made *nothing imperfect*. God is not *the author of confusion* (1 Cor. xiv. 33). Chaos and Creation are opposites. Creation is of God; but Chaos is not of God." Then the question follows, "How then did the earth *become* a desolation?" As a reply reference is made to the old idea to which we refer, and it is said, "with regard to the agency by which the earth was brought into the condition in which it is here described by Moses, namely, without form and void,—that is, *a ruin*,—it is evident from the nature of the case that this agency must have been hostile to God; and it has been supposed by many persons (and the supposition was inserted in the royal laws of England by King Edgar in the tenth century, and in the biblical poem of the Anglo-Saxon bard Caedmon, in the seventh century), that in the language of St. Jude 9, the angels 'who kept not their first estate,' *their* beginning, ἀρχήν (the word used here by Moses), were permitted by Almighty God, for His own wise purposes of a greater manifestation of His glory in a new creation, to exercise their desires and powers for evil in damaging His work

of creation, and to mar the structure of the earth as originally made by Him."

On all this we may remark :—*First* : that the fact that the earth was once in a state of incompleteness, or that it was not by one Divine act created in a state of absolute perfection, is not to be regarded as utterly inconsistent with right ideas of God. Certainly God did not form it to remain in any incomplete or imperfect condition ; but it is certainly true, not only that He might, but that He actually did, carry on His glorious work through many stages, at each of which it was very far from that state of order without confusion which it ultimately reached ; and yet at each of which, too, it was just in that very state in which God did put it in order to its further progress towards that final condition in which it might in every respect be pronounced "very good." In fact, it might be as well argued, that the half-formed chick could be no work of God, because it was not yet prepared to break its shell and appear in a state of perfect development. *Secondly* : we may repeat what we have already said, that, whilst geology knows of many local and comparatively immense catastrophes, it knows of no one so truly universal and destructive as that here supposed. *Thirdly* : it does seem extravagant and unnatural to ascribe to the malice and power of fallen spirits a physical revolution so tremendous as to leave a world like ours literally "*a ruin*," the more especially as we have not so much as one valid proof, Scriptural or scientific, to which we can look for any real support. And, *fourthly* : if the essential harmony of Scripture and science is ever to be clearly seen and fully demonstrated, the interpreters of the former must carefully abstain from lending the authority of learning to the mere hypotheses of earlier and less enlightened times, and, whilst making wise use of all judicious criticism, closely adhere to the express statements of the one and to the ascertained facts of the other.

5. We may now remark, that this verse seems to have been

constructed, not so much to give a sublime description of the condition of things existing in the distant past as to form a most appropriate introduction to the whole subsequent account of the Divine formative work ;—the first clause indicating that state of imperfect formation on the one hand, and of destitution of befitting furniture on the other, which was removed by the final distribution of land and water, and by the production of the countless organic forms of the vegetable and animal kingdoms ;—the second setting forth that state of universal darkness which was succeeded by that of settled normal illumination ;—and the third symbolically representing that mysterious Divine Agency, that all-pervading Energy, by which the whole work about to be described was effected. We need not say more as to the first. As regards the second, we are certainly not warranted to infer from the reference to the darkness that no light was conceived to have then existed in any part of the universe, in sun or moon or star. We have here no express announcement of the production of these abysmal waters, and must accordingly view it as a part of the earlier creative work. Though the earth, as a whole, was then no mere chaos, doubtless these waters were truly chaotic, and incapable of supporting those countless forms of life with which they were afterwards to abound. Instead of “the Spirit of God” some prefer to render, “a wind, or the wind of God ;” as if the author, by introducing the idea of a mighty wind, designed to add to the terrific grandeur of his picture. However, no sentence, no clause is introduced for the sake of mere effect. His words suggest the emblem of a gentle bird rather than that of a fearful tempest. In this way he brings before our mind the pregnant thought of the silent and mysterious agency of the all-creative Spirit,—that Spirit who is elsewhere said to have “garnished the heavens” as well as “to renew the face of the earth.” Though spoken of as “hovering over the face of the waters,” His agency must be viewed as reaching their greatest depths ; and as these waters virtually formed the entire sur-

face, that agency may be justly deemed universal. Nay, though introduced here in relation to this world alone, as we cannot trace the development of one part of the universe to one kind of Divine agency, and that of another part to another kind of like agency, we are thus led to contemplate the Spirit here alluded to as ever present, and ever acting throughout the entire universe. As said, then, the whole subsequent work is to be ascribed to Him.

6. We are not told how long the twofold state of things continued. The words might refer to a period, either of comparatively short duration, or of the greatest length. Read in the light of geology, they would suggest the latter rather than the former. At any rate, the entire verse, relating to that state on the one hand, and to the agency of the Spirit on the other, could not possibly have been so framed by one who regarded the creative periods as mere ordinary days. To this we have elsewhere referred. We refer to it again, because we wish here to bring out what we regard as forming, along with the introduction of light, the work of day one. To prepare for this, we have spoken of the production of the waters as forming one of the early portions of the Divine work. If we do not include these in that one day's work, we must view them as not at all included in the whole creative work. The introduction of light has very frequently been treated as the entire work of day one, and that on the ground that God is for the first time represented as speaking or commanding, as He is in the case of each subsequent act. However, we find more than one such act included in one day's work; and, though the style of the narrative is thus altered, we can in this see no reason for excluding what is expressly declared to be a portion of the creative work. By altering as before, our meaning will be clearly seen,—“In the beginning God created the earth, and at a certain period of its development it was waste and desolate, and darkness (was) on the face of the deep; and the

Spirit of God (was) hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light," etc. Now, though the first statement relates to the entire formation of the earth, we are led at once to analyse it, and to connect all that must of necessity have been done before the earth could have reached the state indicated by the second verse, with the work in the introduction of light, and thus to come to the right conclusion as to the real work of the day in question. Thus we must include the creation of the constituent elements, the endless processes which, if we suppose a gradual condensation and the like, must have preceded those operations which, amidst the surrounding darkness and throughout these chaotic waters, the great Spirit was carrying on, and which, too, we must add as a further portion of the work referred to. Less than all this we cannot fairly put to the account of "day one."

Now, setting aside everything which science, true or false, may suggest, we must include in that day's work at least that of creating the matter and of bringing it into the state described, that in actual progress and indicated by the reference to the Spirit, and that of the introduction of light. For the sake of argument, let the first be viewed as one act, requiring no extended period of time. Let the day simply begin with it, and let it end with the instantaneous fulfilment of the command, "Let there be light;" and then let us suppose the second verse to refer thus to almost the entire day. We have been thus careful to prove that the state of the earth and the agency of the Spirit there spoken of must be associated with day one. We now add, let any one simply read the words, and then ask whether any intelligent writer could possibly use them as descriptive of a state and an agency which he believed to have continued only throughout one literal day. If not, then the sacred author must be regarded as using the term day as a period of indefinite length.

7. We cannot pass from this subject without recording the

circumstance, that we have often thought this beautiful reference to the great formative Spirit, as thus working in the midst of these chaotic waters, and never ceasing to work till all was reduced to order and filled with life, greatly fitted to cheer and to encourage all who are employed in the mighty work of raising the human race from a moral and spiritual condition as truly chaotic to one of order and beauty and life. The same Divine Spirit hovers over the face of the moral and spiritual abyss ; nor will He cease to work till truth and love, righteousness and peace, shall have been established in the earth.

III.

“ And God said, Let there be Light ; and there was light. And God saw the light, that (it was) good ; and God divided between the light and the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening, and there was morning—one day.”

1. Here the narrative assumes a dramatic form. A picture had just been presented to the imagination. Our very senses seem now addressed. From beginning to end the story of creation meets the case of the simplest readers, and yet suits the most enlightened of mankind. What God willed to do, He is said to have commanded to be done. The names which He afterwards leads man to use, He is said to give. The excellence of His works He is said to see and to declare. To this some are disposed to object as anthropomorphic. However, whilst the form of the narrative is thus the better adapted to its purpose, we cannot but maintain that, up to a certain extent, such anthropomorphism is true to fact. It is but a truism, that, if man be so far like God, God must be so far like man,—if the child be like the father, the father must be like the child,—if man be like God, when viewed as a will-endowed creature, or as a being endowed with that mysterious and sublime faculty of will which, of however limited power, involves as well real personality as responsible agency, God must be

like man when contemplated as a Will-manifesting Creator, or as a Being possessing that infinitely more mysterious and sublime perfection of Almighty or Unlimited Will, with which we associate the unspeakably precious idea of the Divine Personality on the one hand, and without which we can suppose no such Divine agency as could inspire intelligent gratitude or secure loving obedience on the other. If, then, the Divine Father thus far resembles the Divine family, why should any one complain if He is represented as accommodating Himself to the feebleness of His children, by speaking as they speak or by doing as they do?

2. Here we deem it very important to determine the exact meaning and true reference of the words. The first sentence has been doubtless before, and certainly since, the days of Longinus, regarded as in the highest degree sublime. Such also is the apostolic allusion to it: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." If interpreted, not of one grand instantaneous act, but, as they may, we do not say as they must be, of a mighty work, involving many kinds of work and carried on through long ages of time, the words might seem to lose much of their sublimity and of their power over the human imagination. Whatever the length of time involved, we cannot study the scope and meaning of the entire paragraph without perceiving that no mere temporary illumination, far less any mere flash of light, was intended, but that perfect and permanent illumination of the earth which we now enjoy. This is fully proved by the simple fact that the light is called day, as the darkness is called night, and thus is the very light which has ever formed the day, and which will do so to the end of time.

If this had been kept in view, a great amount of curious but needless speculation as to the character of this early light would have been avoided. No one would have ever suggested the

Zodiacal light, or some great change in the axis of the earth ; nor would we have been led back to the time when the earth was "self-luminous" ; nor would the idea have been suggested, as in Dr. Dawson's valuable work, "Archaia," of "luminous matter diffused through the whole space of the solar system, or surrounding our globe with a mantle" or "self-luminous atmosphere," which, "if sufficiently brilliant, would exclude the light of the sun and of the heavenly bodies ; and, as its light became exhausted and that of the sun increased, the latter would gradually be installed into his office as the sole orb of day." We do not like to mar a theory of such ingenuity and beauty ; but we must remember that we are here told of a light which was to continue as long as day and night should alternate, and not of one which was to be succeeded by another—that of the sun ; nor can we suppose such an atmosphere to have continued, if ever existent, through the enormous periods during which the celestial light is thus imagined to have been outshone. Besides, if the supposed atmosphere had been as brilliant as the theory requires—"sufficiently brilliant to exclude the light of the sun,"—then must it at the same time have been so bright as to disperse all darkness, and so universal as to prevent the possibility of such a thing as night. But such could not possibly be the light here referred to, as the record speaks as distinctly of the darkness which continued to form the night as of the light which had begun to form the day. Whatever the consequences, then, we must regard the whole cosmical arrangements, on which the normal illumination of the earth depends, as fully completed when the glorious work so sublimely spoken of was fully finished ; and therefore must conclude, not only that the sun thus early existed, but that this very light is virtually declared to come from him. This is implied in what we have already said, that, if the light here referred to include that which at first formed, and which was to continue to form, the day, and if the sun was ordained to give, and

thus gave and continues to give that very same light—the light which forms the day,—then must the sacred writer have had the sun and the light in their true relationship present to his mind, though, doubtless, for sufficient reasons, he was led to refer to the perennial flood first, and to reserve all reference to the perennial fountain for a subsequent place in his descriptive account.

3. In keeping with this we may note the following :—

First. The words “let there be light,” consist with the idea of the pre-existence of light. They would as naturally refer to the introduction as to the creation of light.

Secondly. The reference here is to the earth alone, on which the darkness had just been said to rest, and whose day alone, and not day anywhere or everywhere, the light is afterwards said to form.

Thirdly. We are not told of the source or sources of the darkness. Of course, it might have been due to the absolute non-existence, as well as to the simple absence of light. Such simple absence of light, again, might or might not have been due to the presence of some obscuring medium, some such dense atmosphere as may have then darkened the earth. Thus was it in Egypt in the case of that “darkness which might be felt,” and which simply obscured the light of the sun ; thus is it locally, though not universally, even yet, “a thick darkness” sometimes rests on the earth, whilst the sun shines in all his strength overhead. In such a case, the earth would have to be prepared for the reception of the light, as the light would have to be provided to shine upon the earth. As to the real fact, the words do not of themselves decide ; only, the great Divine Agent is spoken of as working on earth and as introducing the light, but whether by directly creating or producing it, or by removing such an obscuring cause as just supposed, we are not informed. If we suppose the existence and removal of such a cause, then would the full tide of light, which forms

the day, flow in upon the earth, and the sun would appear in all his glory as the real source of day. In this case, let the earth revolve on its axis, as it is now known to do, or let the sun go down below the horizon, as he apparently does, and as he was long supposed really to do, and then, as a matter of course, darkness will return—the darkness which forms the night.

Fourthly. So far as the mode of expression, or rather the manner of statement, is concerned, a fit illustration might be found in the beautiful allusion to this passage to which we have already referred: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Here we have spiritual darkness, spiritual light, the spiritual sun, just as we have physical darkness, physical light, the natural or material sun. Further, we have the Divine work in the heart, the seat of the spiritual darkness, and consequent entrance of the spiritual light, just as we have the Divine work on the earth, the region of the physical darkness, and the consequent entrance of the physical light. Again, in both cases, the light is spoken of absolutely, as if directly shining or directly caused to shine. Yet, afterwards, the real and permanent source of spiritual light is alluded to—"the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,"—just as the real and permanent source of physical light, the orb of day, is subsequently spoken of; so that, as the former existed before the Divine act or work of apostolic enlightenment, the latter may be supposed to have existed before the Divine act or work of terrestrial illumination.

4. We have not written thus, nor have we suggested this illustration, as if the words in question favoured one hypothesis rather than another. As we have said elsewhere of the narrative as a whole, we may say of them in particular, that they are thoroughly non-scientific but perfectly true. If we study them somewhat more closely, we shall find them so general

and free, as well as so comprehensive and appropriate as to admit of such an interpretation as can be gainsaid by no scientific discovery. To show the truth of this, we have only to indicate to how great an extent they are of indeterminate meaning. They are certainly thus far of definite import, that they cannot fairly be interpreted of less than the entire work of permanent terrestrial illumination. But what do they really determine as to the time, the manner, the order in which that work was or was to be effected? We have already said that the sacred writer speaks of the earth, first, as created; next, as in a state of imperfection and darkness; and thirdly, as normally illuminated; but that he does not indicate the time intervening between the initial act of creation and the final act of illumination. It may have been comparatively short or enormously long. We have simply maintained that he could not possibly have so alluded to the condition of the earth on the one hand, and to the agency of the Divine Spirit on the other, if he had intended to convey the idea of so short a period as that of a common day.

Thus far the words do little else than ascribe the whole work to God, leaving its nature, order, and the like for the investigation and study of man. As also already observed, they of themselves do not prove whether the production or merely the introduction of light was here intended. Thus the great luminary might have been then created, and there might have existed no obscuring medium to intercept his rays; or he might have previously existed, fully prepared to give the needful light as soon as some such existing medium was removed from the surface of the earth. In the former case, the words, "let there be light," would be virtually equivalent to "let the sun exist." In the latter case, they would relate to the removal of the obscuring cause. But, it might be said, in this latter instance we should have no reference to the creation or production of light, unless that implied in the subsequent reference to the luminaries. The whole work here alluded to

would seem to be reduced to the comparatively insignificant work of removing an obstruction or of preparing the earth for the reception of the light. However, this appears to give to the words a more determinate sense than they can be proved of necessity to bear. They may be supposed to mean, "let the light expressly prepared for the purpose be introduced and continue to enlighten the earth," just as well as, "let the light which now flows from the sun illumine the world." Nor is this a mere distinction without a real difference. In the former case, the production of the light as well as the preparation of the earth to receive it is set forth, as the writer evidently intends, as the work of 'this day'; whilst, in the latter, as above said, the production of the light is simply connected with the sun, and the work here spoken of reduced to that of removing a dense and darkening atmosphere from the surface of the earth.

5. Thus, then, do the words appear sufficiently general and in some respects sufficiently indeterminate to admit of an interpretation consistent with almost any hypothesis, and thus with any theory which it may be within the reach of science to establish. Let us make one or two tentative suppositions. Suppose it possible to prove that the earth never was long in any state of disorder and darkness, but that the whole solar system was brought to a state of physical completeness in a far shorter time than it can ever be possible to demonstrate, then the words under consideration will be found most appropriate. Let, however, the cosmical theory of Herschel, La Place, and others be accepted, and thus let a period of inconceivable length intervene between the first creative act and the dispersion of the darkness, and still we cannot deny the appropriateness of the words or justly maintain that they cannot admit of so vast an interval. In this case, we have simply to regard all those endless changes which the elementary matter underwent as simply passed over in befitting silence. That

time especially, in which the earth is held to have been in a state of igneous fusion, or to have been "self-luminous," will have passed away. We think this theory, though not demonstrated, bears every mark of truth. Now, whilst we say that here it receives absolutely no positive support, we can thus also say, that all who receive it may most freely and fairly interpret the words in harmony with it. Again, suppose it could be proved that the solar system was so developed that, when the earth was prepared to receive the full tide of solar light, the sun was prepared, not only to give light, but to give it, nay, to continue to give it, in the very proportion required ; then would the words of the Divine command be found most suitable, applying, as they would, as well to the provision of the light for the earth as to the contemporaneous preparation of the earth for the light. But, let us suppose that the sun was prepared to give the proper light long before the earth was prepared fully to receive it, then still would they be suitable, as they would, in such a case, be understood to mean, as we have found them capable of meaning, "let the light, prepared for the purpose, enlighten the earth." There seems to remain only one other possible hypothesis, namely, that the sun, however he may have dispersed the darkness in question, was not for some time after, it may have been for very many ages, perfectly developed or organically fitted, not as a mere material body, but as a terrestrial luminary, to give the proper supply of light ; then the words would just be held to imply, what we have said they imply, that, whatever the time or the work involved, this day's work was not and could not be finished till the luminaries were fully fitted for their purpose, nay, till all the cosmical conditions of normal illumination were established.

6. For the sake of clearer exposition, we resolved the opening announcement into two, "In the beginning God created the heavens, and in the same beginning He also created the

earth." In giving his detailed account of the latter, the sacred author reserves all reference to the former for such subordinate place in his narrative as might best subserve his general purpose. Here his first reference is implied rather than expressed. Here we behold the chain, more bright and precious than gold, which connects the earth with the heavens, a chain of brightest, richest light. Here, though not yet named, the sun appears.

Thus are we now led to ask, What of the celestial orbs? Are we here led of necessity to infer aught as to the time or order of their creation and development? From the order in which they are spoken of in the opening verse, we might infer that they were, possibly at least, conceived to have been created before the earth. However, all that the words will really decide is, that within the period called "the beginning," and which may have been comparatively short or may have extended through ages of incalculable length, the entire universe was fully framed. As to time or order, we are not informed. Whether the starry heavens were created before or after or along with the earth, we cannot here discover. All may have been created before the earth, or all after it, or part, possibly the vastly greater part, before, and the residue after it. They are simply traced to the all-creating Hand. Here the record is very brief, "He made the stars." It belonged not to the sacred author's design to say more. The planets, those "wandering stars" which are more closely connected with our world, are overlooked, or rather, ranked along with the other orbs of light. With the exception, then, of our earth, with its "greater light to rule the day" and its "lesser light to rule the night," we are here led to regard the entire universe as left to the simple gaze of the wondering eye of man or to the scientific investigation of the cultivated and inquiring mind.

Without interfering with the terms of the record, we may freely accept whatever astronomy may teach with respect to the vastness, the order, the antiquity, or the development of

the stellar universe. It may have come forth in all its perfection and glory from the hand of the infinite Creator, "a mighty maze, but not without a plan;" or, the elementary substances of which it was finally framed may have been primarily diffused through measureless space and gradually transformed into these countless orbs during the lapse of measureless time. We need call in question no theory of progressive creation. We have simply to trace all to the hand of the one and only Creator, if we would fulfil the sole condition of a fair interpretation. Thus, though sun and moon must be viewed as spoken of according to appearance, and as united with the rest of the heavenly bodies as forming one Divine day's work, we are really taught nothing as to their place in the universe, or as to the stage of universal development at which they were called into being, or as to the actual relationship between them and the earth, or as to the time spent in their and in its preparation for their respective places in that system to which man belongs and of which it specially belonged to the sacred writer to treat.

7. Supposing then the starry heavens to have come into existence in whatever way science may suggest, or in a way so mysterious that no science can ever resolve the mystery, we may now turn to the earth, with its sun and moon, in special relationship to it. As often said, the description is that of appearance. It leaves us to find out the reality. The earth might certainly be the largest of the three, at rest in the centre, the sun and moon literally revolving around it. The reverse may be the fact, the moon revolving around the earth, and both revolving around the sun. In either case, the sun is the greater, and the moon the lesser luminary; and this is what the narrative was concerned to record, and what the sacred author did not require the aid of science to discover. Again, they may have been separately and quite independently created; or they may have been progressively and contempo-

raniously formed of one and the same mass of widely diffused matter, according to the commonly accepted hypothesis.

In this way there is nothing in the record to prevent us from supposing the whole solar system to have thus originated, and that in the midst of myriads of fixed stars, themselves being usually believed, rather than ever proved, to be so many suns as well as centres of systems like the solar. We may suppose the constituent material revolving on one common axis, and extending from its common centre almost to the nearest stars. We may follow it in its numerous transformations, through the loss of heat or the power of gravity or the laws of affinity, till it has been broken up into so many solid globes, or rather into so many globes held in a state of fusion by the development of heat as the result of condensation, and thus shining for many ages with their own glowing light, and gradually cooling and solidifying till, the sun excepted, they lost that light and began to shine with the light which continues to flow from the common centre.

Though the planets are not mentioned in our record, we need not exclude them from the system to which our earth belongs, and of which the earth is here set forth as of highest importance: we have simply to bear in mind, that, in all this, we are not directly interpreting, but rather showing what consists with fair interpretation. Thus, we may further suppose the sun shining in all his strength and glory as that mighty and wonderful central orb which it is now known to be, whilst the earth, having long ceased to be self-luminous, and being yet enveloped in an atmosphere too dense and too dark to admit his rays, at once revolving around the great centre as well as about its own axis, and being in the very state of imperfect formation and total darkness here expressly referred to. In this case, we have simply once more to suppose the surface of the earth prepared for the light, and to regard the words of the Divine command as what we have suggested as a fair equivalent, "let the light provided for the earth shine forth

upon it." Thus may we regard the sacred narrative as a canvas carefully prepared by the Divine Artist, faithfully retaining a perfect outline of the great creation, yet with many a blank which may safely remain untouched, or which may be filled up more or less correctly according as the Divine outline is justly appreciated on the one hand, and the Divine works are truly known on the other.

8. We have elsewhere, separately, and at very considerable length, shown that the sacred writer has made provision in the peculiar structure of his narrative, and especially in his method of numbering the creative days, for the separation between the light and the luminaries, and for this prior reference to the light, though his words indicate the fact that he was fully aware of their true relationship. The heavenly bodies, though *a* fourth day's work, might of course have been *the* first day's work, or rather might have been the first really finished part of the entire work described. In the illustration from the case of an ordinary account, we supposed more than one man sometimes at work at the same time. Thus alone could the idea of the great Divine worker simultaneously carrying on various parts of the same work or various kinds of work be really illustrated. We may here, then, simply refer to our more lengthened discussion of this subject.

9. We repeat, then, that this paragraph relates to the whole work of terrestrial illumination, though that part of it which relates to the formation of the luminaries is only afterwards directly referred to, but by no means said to have been subsequently effected. We suggested several reasons for this earlier allusion to the light. Doubtless, with whatever end in view, the sacred writer wished to present the production of so grand and wonderful an object as light as one glorious and separate work of the all-wise as well as all-powerful Creator. Within the whole realm of nature can be found nothing more mysterious, nothing more beautiful, nothing more sublime,

nothing better fitted to be an emblem of the serene eternal One. How well has He been called "the Father of lights"! How sweet, as well as sublime the words, "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all"! We need not say, how numerous have been the worshippers of light, the worshippers of sun and moon and stars. Well was it to separate the light from the luminaries, if for no other purpose than that of the more effectually checking the strong tendency to worship both. How natural for the sacred writer to add, "And God saw the light, that it was good," expressing thus the Divine complacency in this most glorious work! Its excellency ever awakens the profoundest interest of mankind. That interest can never cease. From the contemplation of it, poetry has drawn not a little of her richest inspiration, and has had to guard against the temptation to blend the created with the Uncreated Light. So mighty is the mystic influence, that even a learned Christian divine has gone so far as to affirm that "physical light was in God from eternity." So almost to the same effect the sublime words of Milton, which we here feel constrained to add,—

"Hail, holy light, offspring of Heaven first-born,
Or of the eternal co-eternal beam
May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,
And never but in unapproach'd light
Dwelt from eternity,—dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
Or hear'st thou rather, pure ethereal stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun,
Before the heavens, thou wert, and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
The rising world of waters, dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite."

If this cannot be accounted either Scripturally or scientifically correct, it will ever rank with the finest poetry of this or of any other land. The blind poet had learned to praise, almost to worship, the light, that precious friend whom he had "loved

and lost ;” so that he might well add what we cannot withhold,—

“Thus with the year
Seasons return ; but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer’s rose,
Or flocks or herds, or human face Divine.
So much the rather thou, Celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate ; there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.”

But, however lofty the conceptions of imagination, however grand the utterances of the poet, the plain prosaic teachings of science unveil a world of wonders which no created mind can ever fully comprehend ; nay, the world of sense is itself of infinite beauty. How Divine an artist the light of heaven ! How many colours at his command ! With what perfect skill he ever does his work ! Well may the light be deemed the finest emblem of the Deity. It seems to possess the very attribute of omnipresence. It fills the material universe with its glory. It appears to act as the very life and soul of every created thing. With, or even without, the aid of the telescope, it brings the most distant worlds near to the eye of man. Unless for it, such darkness as once covered the earth would ever rest on the face of the whole creation. Like God, invisible, it makes the universe to be seen.

We need not allude to that genial warmth which ever accompanies its enlightening beams. In this narrative we are told of the solar light, not of the solar heat, nor of the real plan and manifold purposes of the sun in the economy of nature. We are not, on this account, to infer defect ; wonderfully has science done what Scripture thus most wisely left her to accomplish. Her revelations, rather, her demonstrations, might well suggest as many doubts and difficulties as have ever been suggested by the apparently most objectionable statements of Scripture.

We shall close this part of our subject by giving one or two illustrations of this. We might refer to the inconceivable velocity of light, as to which the evidence may be justly regarded as perfect. It is easy to say, that the velocity has been usually reckoned 192,000 miles a second, or to say that, at the lowest calculation, it may be regarded as 185,000 miles a second; but who can comprehend what such a simple statement really implies? or what thoughtful mind could possibly accept it as assuredly true, unless on the ground of a strict demonstration, or on that of testimony sufficient to establish the truth of any or of all the miracles of Scripture? We shall say no more as to this, but simply quote the following from the able work of Professor Tyndall to which we have already referred. Let us think of the thousands or millions of years during which our sun has continued to pour forth his mighty tide of light and heat, and then ponder what we find said concerning the latter,—“Knowing the annual receipt of the earth, we can calculate the entire quantity of heat emitted by the sun in a year. Conceive a hollow sphere to surround the sun, its centre being the sun’s centre, and its surface at the distance of the earth from the sun. The section of the earth cut by this surface is to the whole area of the hollow sphere, as 1 : 2,300,000,000; hence the quantity of solar heat intercepted by the earth is only $\frac{1}{2,300,000,000}$ of the total radiation; that is to say, the mighty total of heat emitted by the sun is equal to 2,300,000,000 times the quantity which our earth receives.”

We might have said something of the chief theories pertaining to the nature of light. We might have alluded to that infinite ocean of ether, through which, according to almost universal opinion, light is propagated in waves from the luminous centre, and which we cannot but regard as one of the most wonderful works of God. Thus simply referring to this inconceivably subtle medium, we may borrow the following from the same author:—“We have now cleared our way towards the full comprehension of the cause of colour. This

spectrum is to the eye what the musical scale is to the ear ; its different colours represent notes of different pitch. The vibrations which produce the impression of red are slower, and the ethereal waves which they generate are larger, than those which produce the impression of violet, while the other colours are excited by waves of some intermediate length. The length of the waves, both of sound and light, and the number of shocks which they respectively impart to the ear and eye, have been strictly determined. Let us here go through a simple calculation. Light travels through space at a velocity of 192,000 miles a second. Reducing this to inches, we find the number to be 12,165,120,000. Now it is found that 39,000 waves of red light, placed end to end, would make up an inch ; multiplying the number of inches in 192,000 miles by 39,000, we obtain the number of waves of red light embraced in a distance of 192,000 miles : this number is 474,439,680,000,000. *All these waves enter the eye in a single second.*" Such is a glimpse at the wonderful character of this Divine day's work. If such be the created, what shall we think or say of the Uncreated Light ? We may assuredly say, that he who can believe that the above concluding sentence is really true,—“All these waves enter the eye in a single second,”—need be at no loss to accept the most glorious, though, it may be, apparently the least credible announcements of Scripture, whether with respect to the character of God or with regard to the destiny of man ; above all, need he be at no loss to accept the first grand announcement, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

IV.

“And God said : Let there be an Expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it be a division between the waters and waters. And God made the expanse, and divided between the waters under the expanse and the waters above the expanse : and it was so. And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening, and there was morning—a second day.”

1. We need not repeat that such is the second day's work in

the order of description rather than in the strict order of time. It would seem natural thus to pass from the reference to the light to that to the aerial firmament, by which the light is so beautifully reflected, or in which it seems, to the mere eye of sense, to shine so brightly. Some would suppose that we have here an orderly allusion to the four Elements of ancient philosophy—Light or Fire, Air, Water, Earth. Be this as it may, the work spoken of, the aerial firmament or terrestrial atmosphere, is correctly treated as a real and separate department of the one Divine work, as a kingdom of nature no less distinct and independent than the vegetable or animal. A grand and wonderful kingdom, too, it must be regarded, if we consider its constitution, its extent, or its relation to life in this world. As in the case of the light, it is referred to, not according to what it actually is, but according to what it evidently does. In both cases, we are wisely left to inquire into their nature and manifold uses. Here we are told little else than what was needed for the purpose of identification.

2. Many greatly prefer the term expanse to that of firmament, as excluding the idea of solidity which, it has been maintained, is conveyed by the Hebrew word. However, be the primary etymological sense what it may, the word is certainly here used of no solid dome or crystalline sphere, as the blue vault is supposed to have been deemed by the sacred writer. Those who appeal either to etymology or to the use of such expressions as "the windows of heaven" and the like, in proof of the Scripture idea of such a sphere, in which the lamps of the great house were suspended, and on which flowed the celestial river or ocean whence came the rain to water the earth, assuredly press mere figurative speech into the service of a narrow and mistaken system of interpretation. Here at least we can find no trace of physical error, as is evident from the nature of the separation alluded to, not a separation effected once for all, as the English version suggests, "between" the

waters which were under the firmament and the waters which were above the firmament, but a separation constantly maintained between the waters below and those above, and therefore implying a constant process of separation, of which he shows at least a partial knowledge, when, in the next section and in his allusion to the rising mist or vapour, he reveals a correct conception of the real origin of rain. As, then, no such lofty solid dome or sphere could have been intended, and as the term firmament does not now at least convey the idea of solidity, but is used as well of the atmosphere as of the starry heavens, there seems to be no great reason for the preference now usually given to the term expanse.

3. In this day's work two things appear to be involved : *first*, the removal of those commingled vapours which may have caused the darkness already spoken of as covering the earth ; and *secondly*, the production of the terrestrial atmosphere, to which alone direct reference is made. The former may be inferred from what is said of the design of the firmament. This indeed refers to the final result or permanent purpose, and therefore implies that, as we have found in the case of the light, the atmosphere is viewed as a finished portion of the habitable globe, before this day's work could be regarded as really done. Still, the words refer to the beginning as well as to the completion of the work ; so that, whilst indicating the purpose of separating the waters below from those above, they suggest the idea that, before the separating medium was introduced, the waters were in some way mixed or united, and this they could be only by an atmosphere of vapour resting on and mingling with the waters of the great deep.

4. This double work may be supposed to have been effected in the shortest period of time, or to have been carried on from first to last, through many ages of the creative week. The words of the narrative will admit of either supposition. We assume the latter, and thus make full allowance for the slow

and sure operation of the physical laws. Like allowance may be made for the action of the same laws in the production of the waters of the ocean, which are of so vast and essential importance in the economy of the world. At the same time, the more we consider the nature and uses of these two precious elements, air and water, with their peculiar relations to one another, and the more carefully we ponder the fact that they exist, not only in the immense quantities, but also in apparently the very proportions, in which they are required, we can hardly fail to perceive the presence of more than mere physical causes, even that of an undoubtedly intelligent directing power. The existence of a transparent elastic fluid rising to a height of over forty miles above the surface of the earth, without which no sound could be heard and no life could exist, and whose pressure on every part of the animal frame is at once so vast and yet so thoroughly unfelt as to be known to science alone, may well awaken admiration and tend to confirm religious belief. Some may suppose that the ocean might have been wisely confined within much narrower bounds. However, we may rest assured, that the proportion of land and water is the result of perfect arrangement, and could not be greatly altered without injury to the diversified tribes of the animal kingdom.

5. What we have said of the respective quantities of air and water might of course be repeated of the relative quantities of their constituent principles, of the Nitrogen or Azote of the one, the Hydrogen of the other, and the Oxygen which is common to both. Of these Sir J. Herschel gives this brief but comprehensive statement :—"Oxygen constitutes one-fifth of the atmosphere, eight-ninths of the sea, half the silicious and calcareous, and more than half the aluminous rocks and soils, besides entering as a large element into almost every other mineral substance, so that it cannot be reckoned as constituting less than half the ponderable matter of the globe. Hydro-

gen forms one-ninth of the ocean, and of all that water which enters into the essential composition of a great many minerals, and the whole hygrometric contents of the atmosphere and of the soil. It enters also largely into the composition of coal, combined with carbon. Nitrogen constitutes four-fifths of the atmosphere, and is otherwise very sparingly disseminated, existing chiefly as a constituent of the nitrates of potash, soda, and lime, which occur in some abundance, disseminated through the soil in India, Persia, and the deserts of Arabia and Africa, efflorescing in caves in America. The nitrate of soda forms strata of considerable thickness in Peru and Chili, on the western slope of the Andes."

We have given this statement in full, that it may clearly appear, that, whilst in the form of air and water, these three elementary principles exist in the proportions in which they are required, they may be easily conceived to have existed on the surface of the earth in very different proportions, and thus to have failed to secure the productive and continued existence of the terrestrial atmosphere and ocean, and consequently to have failed to render our globe really habitable, not to speak of making it the fit and happy home of the human race. Amounting to half the ponderable matter of the earth, oxygen may be conceived to have accumulated on the surface to the greatest and most injurious redundancy, instead of being most usefully employed in forming the numerous and diversified bodies of which the crust is composed; or, supposing it and certain other elementary substances to have existed, to some considerable extent, in different proportions, it may be conceived to have entered, to so much larger an amount, into the composition of such solid bodies as to leave a thoroughly inadequate amount for the formation of the absolutely necessary sum of either sea or air or both.

As to Hydrogen, we may observe, that, existing, as it does, in chemical union with other bodies, or as part of the solid surface of the earth, to a comparatively very limited extent, we

may well wonder to find a substance of such peculiar properties, and of such essential importance, present exactly where it was required, and in that state of full chemical union with oxygen, to which we are indebted for the mighty mass of waters which encompass the earth and without which the existing economy of things could not have been.

A similar remark may be made with respect to the third principle here referred to, namely, Nitrogen. Existing elsewhere to even a less extent than hydrogen, we may certainly wonder to find it in sufficient abundance on the surface of the earth, and that along with the needful amount of oxygen, to form that infinitely precious circumambient fluid in which, while almost insensible of its presence, we may in some sense be said to live and move and have our physical being. Shall we trace all this to the sole action of physical law? May we not infer, and that with infallible certainty, the presence of mind,—of wisdom and of choice?

6. The qualities of these three elementary substances may well excite the highest admiration, and, with their relative quantities, suggest the idea of an intelligent Cause. We need hardly say that these qualities are totally unlike those of their two most important compounds. For instance, how inflammable both oxygen and hydrogen! What of greater explosive power than these, and that in the very proportion in which they chemically unite in the formation of water. In its separate state, how inconsistent hydrogen with animal life! In these respects how different their properties, and, we may add, how different their volume, when combined in the form of water! So of nitrogen, whose other name, azote, marks it out as a non-supporter of life, we may remark, how wonderful it is that it should form no less than four-fifths of that air on which all animal life depends!

7. We might have extended our view, and embraced in our remarks the entire constituent elements of the terrestrial cosmos:

we might safely assume that, without exception, and like those already referred to, they all possess the very qualities and exist in the very quantities which best fit them for their respective purposes. No philosopher has yet discovered a needless wheel in the vast complex machine. No science has yet detected either the needless existence or the redundant amount of any one material substance. We do not now refer to the architecture or to the erection of the great house, but simply to the character and proportions of the materials of which it has been built, and which have been in some way provided and prepared in exact accordance with the nature and extent of the structure. How shall we account for this? Is all accidental? We repeat, may all be ascribed to the operations of natural law? Would not this be to trace the relative quantities of the elementary substances to the action of their own peculiar qualities, or to say that the qualities determined the quantities, in fact, to maintain that the existence of the substances was due to the action of the qualities inhering in these substances, and therefore presupposing their existence, and thus to affirm a palpable self-contradiction? The substances, then, both as to quantities and qualities, must be traced to some sufficient Cause *ab extra*,—a Cause existing before themselves, the Cause of all causes and of all existences, spoken of in our opening sentence: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

8. We might illustrate this whole subject by a reference to what is said of the temple of Solomon: “And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither; so that there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.” Let us suppose that all the other materials were thus prepared. Further, let us suppose an intelligent stranger to have observed the whole more or less carefully heaped up or spread out not far from the intended temple site. He might at a glance infer the purpose, or might at least conclude that they

were collected for various uses, if not for some common end. Observation might lead to no further reflection. Let him return to the same spot and find the erection so far advanced and the builders all at work. He marks how stone after stone fits place after place in the rising edifice. He sees the same to hold good of the other materials, whether of wood or of metal ; all evidently answering to places for which they at least seemed finally fitted and fully prepared. At last he witnesses the closing work done, and admires the beauty and grandeur of the finished structure. He notices that, of all the various materials which had at first attracted his attention, there remained none to tell of needless work, as the richly furnished and finely proportioned temple before his eyes told of no lack of preparation.

What would be the fair and certain inference ? Why, not only that the whole, in all its parts, nay, to the minutest details, was planned by some skilful agent, but also that a very great amount of work, directed by the same or by like skilful agency, had been done in providing and preparing the various kinds of material, which seemed so naturally to find their proper places and to fulfil their respective purposes in the one complete temple. Intelligent design would be observed everywhere. Chance or accident would be seen nowhere. Every block of stone and every piece of timber would be regarded as prepared with a view to the fulfilment of some special part of an intended work, or to the realisation of some individual portion of a highly intelligent as well as most complex design. Now, such a house or temple is our world.

At present we do not treat of the wonderful plan according to which it has been erected, but of the wonderful materials of which it has been built. Of these we have been remarking two things—*first*, that they consist of substances of such properties or qualities as fit them, like the stones, etc., to which we have been referring, for their respective places and uses ; and, *secondly*, that they exist like those prepared for the temple, in

the requisite proportions, without lack and without redundance, as they now appear in the complex structure of the world. Abundance for any use without redundance implies two things, —actual purpose and nice calculation, real will and greater or less intelligence. So, in the supposed case of the temple ; so, in an inconceivably higher degree, in the actual case of our world. As to the nature of the constituent substances or primary elements, we have already said that they seem clearly to prove the non-eternity or absolute creation of matter.

We have viewed the simple elementary substances as possessing such distinct and apparently unalterable properties, and as constituted in such perfect adaptation to their subordinate agency, as would seem to point infallibly to an intelligent Cause on the one hand, and to prove almost as certainly the fact of a direct or absolute creation on the other. We have not held that all the so-called simple substances must be regarded as such, or that none of them can ever yield to any future analysis. We have merely regarded some of them, the greater number perhaps, as really simple, or as actually composed of ultimate atoms. On this supposition, we have drawn the inference of an act of direct creation. If, however, we accept the exceedingly ingenious Vortex-atom theory of Sir W. Thomson, and thus suppose the existence of only one simple material substance so modified, or rather whose original atoms have been so combined as to form real complex organisms, called vortex-atoms, possessing different properties, and because apparently beyond the reach of chemical analysis regarded as simple substances, and thus known as oxygen, hydrogen, and so on, we then certainly lose the evidence referred to of absolute creation, but we retain as great an amount of evidence of the interposition of a certainly intelligent Cause. Ingenious as it is, this cannot of course be deemed more than a theory. It leaves us to reason as we may, or to deal with Scripture testimony as we are led to understand it, with respect to the origin of the one supposed material substance. But, as we have just said, it

certainly suggests no mere action of essentially and eternally inhering properties, nor merely some one act of intelligence, but an inconceivably vast and absolutely mysterious system of intelligent causation.

This will appear evident, if we consider two things which the theory involves, namely, *first*, that the different kinds of so-called vortex-atoms are not only of such different properties, but are so wonderfully constituted as seemingly to defy the power of all existing agencies to modify, to alter, or to destroy them, and therefore must have been so constituted, either by direct Divine agency, or by such physical causes, simple or combined, as are no longer existent or at least known to exist within the circle of the visible universe; and, *secondly*, that, as we have been fully considering, the numerous substances thus supposed to be produced, and usually deemed simple and elementary, have been, to use the well-known word of Sir J. Herschel, “manufactured” in the very proportions in which they were subsequently required; so that intelligence of the highest character is thus assuredly implied. For, if mere physical causes had determined the mighty changes supposed, they could not, by any possibility, have so acted in a such way, and that probably most complex, that only so much and no more of the one primary substance should be converted into the requisite amount of Oxygen, and in such another way, and that probably most complex also, that only so much and no more of the same primary substance should be converted into the requisite amount of Carbon; and so on, in order to the like exact amount of each of the substances so produced. That such causes, apart from intelligent agency, could possibly so act, we cannot but regard as utterly beyond the bounds of all fair supposition.

Let us, therefore, hold by the ordinary theory of simple atoms, or accept the theory to which we have been alluding of vortex-atoms, the inference is clear and certain. If the former, then we infer a work of direct Divine creation. If the latter, then we infer a work either of direct or of indirect Divine con-

struction. In either case, the various substances produced were, we may repeat, of such properties and in such quantities as fitted them, through endless modes of subsequent chemical combination, to form the materials of which our world has been built. Nor can this be satisfactorily accounted for on any other principle than that of our illustration. As exact preparation practically demonstrated pre-existing detailed architectural plan in the case of the ancient temple, so exact preparation or production in like manner practically demonstrates pre-existing detailed creative plan in the case of the world. In this way, three of the greatest of all facts present themselves to our minds,—that of a Creative Plan, that of Preparatory Production, and that of Constructive Work. What is true of this earth is assuredly true of the entire universe. In fact, Antecedent Plan, Primary Production, and Final Construction sum up the whole History of the Creative Work.

V.

“And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered to one place, and let the dry (land) appear: and it was so. And God called the dry (land) Earth; and the gathering of the waters He called Seas: and God saw that (it was) good.”

1. The important part of the Divine work here introduced we have so far considered, when treating of the order of the narrative as distinguished from that of geology. It is represented as only a portion of one Divine day's work. To what we have elsewhere said we need add no more with respect to the matter of temporal order, but at once assume that no objection can now be justly made to the statement, that the work here alluded to was doubtless carried on from the period of darkness to at least nearly that of the advent of man, and therefore through great part of the creative week. Like all other departments, this is to be regarded as spoken of, not only as begun, but also as in the fullest sense finished. The Divine work was not

really done, till the present distribution of land and water was, to all intents, fully effected, or till the earth was prepared, not merely for the support of animal life in general, but also for the comfortable habitation of the human race.

2. We may remark in passing, that with this work done, especially after the introduction of the vegetable kingdom, we are led to think of the provision of the three different habitations of the three distinct classes of living creatures afterwards alluded to in corresponding order,—water, air, and land, on the one side ; fishes, birds, and land animals on the other.

3. The separation of land and water, or the elevation of the one above the other, is thus set forth as one grand whole. We need hardly repeat, that it involved the manifestation of physical power on the mightiest scale, and that for a period, or rather for periods, too vast for adequate conception. Of course we do not mean to say, that the idea of any such length of time can be gathered from the sacred record. It is enough for us to know that the record fairly admits of whatever time, longer or shorter, science may fairly suggest. A like remark might be added with respect to the entire and exceedingly diversified nature of the work recorded. No statement interferes with the freest inquiry or creates anxiety as to the results.

4. We may not greatly err if, by way of theory, we trace, with Dawson and others, the first extensive appearance of the solid earth rather to the depression of the larger portion of the bed of the primitive ocean than to the elevation of certain smaller portions of it, and that as the result of contraction due to the long continued radiation of heat, by which the whole terrestrial mass may be supposed to have, at an earlier period, been held in a state of fusion. If, through that radiation, a solid crust was formed on the one hand, whilst a like process of solidification due to compression went on at the centre on the other, the space between the solid parts, superficial and central, would

be occupied with matter much less dense, partly, we may suppose, in a gaseous, though chiefly in a liquid state. As radiation proceeded, or as the superficial part contracted, the purely spherical form would be broken up, certain portions of the crust would rise or at least retain their original level, whilst much larger portions would sink or form so many extensive depressions into which the waters would flow. The general level of the ocean would thus be lowered, whilst the solid parts, which retained their former level, would thus seem to emerge from the bosom of the great deep. In this way we may suppose the earliest separation, on a great scale, to have taken place. Some such contraction and accompanying depression may have in these early times again and again occurred.

5. Still, whatever such disturbing power, we must trace, in subsequent periods, the many changes of level, rather to the more limited elevation or depression of the solid surface than to the greatly more extensive elevation or depression of the sea. The formation of the first stratified rocks would doubtless take place whilst the waters were in a state of the greatest impurity or in that of saturation with more solid matter. When the first rocky islands appeared, and afterwards spread out into continents, the agency of air and water would produce effects, as well constructive as destructive, by which the vast processes of stratification would be carried on, and at a rate with which that of those which may now be traced, and whose results may be somewhat accurately measured, cannot be for one moment fairly compared. Again and again would the mightiest igneous forces come into play. Upheavals on the one hand, and depressions on the other, would thus from time to time, and more or less gradually, take place. We have elsewhere alluded to the frequency with which the distribution of land and water underwent the greatest alteration.

All this we must learn from science and not from Scripture.

We need not interpret the latter, as if it meant to convey the idea of one and only one mighty upheaval of the solid land. As we have said, the work of separation involved the preparation of a really habitable earth, and not the mere elevation of a continent of barren rock, and therefore included many a necessary upward and downward movement, nay, many an apparent destruction of whole continents, in order to the real and higher construction of new continents, that the final work might be accomplished, that the home of organic life of the highest as well as of the most varied character might be provided, and that all might appear, as we are here told it did, good in the sight of the great Creator. As these vast and numerous changes were requisite for the final result, the work from first to last was really one and the same, and thus, just as well as though it had at the outset been effected once for all, and had been so in the shortest possible time, may be viewed as most correctly described by the few and simple words of the narrative. In fact, as all the intermediate operations were not only necessary for the final result, but were to such an extent connected with one another that the succeeding depended more or less on the preceding, as stratification on disintegration, or as the elevation of one continent on the depression of another, the whole work must be viewed in the light of one vast and complex system, and as alluded to, from beginning to end, in the one almighty fiat here recorded.

VI.

“And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, the fruit-tree yielding fruit after its kind, whose seed (is) in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, the herb yielding seed after its kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed (is) in itself, after its kind: and God saw that (it was) good. And there was evening, and there was morning—a third day.”

1. Here we find recorded the grand and mysterious work of producing the entire vegetable kingdom—the second half of

this Divine day's work. We do not suppose that the sacred writer had the slightest conception of the many floral worlds which had existed and passed away before that was created on which he gazed, and to which his words doubtless refer. This is by no means inconsistent with the fact that geology reveals these worlds to us. The creation of the existing flora may have implied and did actually imply an immense amount of work, with which he and all mankind, till very recently, were totally unacquainted. His words are not inconsistent with this. How long the Divine Agent continued to work, and through what stages He carried on His mysterious operations, he does not say, and doubtless could not tell. Though he directly alluded to the visible system, we must suppose him to allude, however indirectly, to every previous operation essential to its full development, though it may have been absolutely unknown to him. We may justly regard the highest forms of vegetable life, those which we may suppose of latest production, as really and naturally connected with those of simplest structure and of earliest formation, and that whatever the nature of the bond which links together all the subjects of the common kingdom may be conceived to be, whether that of a law of Divine wisdom according to which the numerous and diversified species were independently introduced, or that of a law of natural evolution according to which they were continuously developed. In either case, the work is one from first to last. The whole may thus be viewed as here included, however unconsciously by the sacred writer. His words at least do not necessarily preclude so wide a reference. Nor is the fact that he entirely passes over all kinds of oceanic plants to be taken as opposed to this, but simply as an illustration of the general character of so brief a record.

2. Here it may not be unwise or needless almost to repeat what we have said elsewhere. One of the main principles of our theory of interpretation is, that the creative work is described,

not as it actually proceeded from first to last, but under the form of so many collective departments corresponding to those of an ordinary house. Here, we may say, the sacred author suggests analogically the stone-work and the wood-work of the great house built by God for man. Just as these, in the case of an ordinary house, may advance together from first to last, and yet it would be natural and certainly admissible, in any account of its erection to begin with the stone-work and next to treat of the wood-work ; so in the case before us we have these two great departments advancing in so many parallel courses, and yet spoken of as if the one preceded the other. Suppose in an account of the erection of an ordinary house the stone-work were represented as one half-year's work, and the wood-work as a second half-year's work, no one would be so unreasonable as to object to the writer's correctness, that the two kinds of work went on together, whilst, in the account, the one was apparently spoken of as finished before the other was alluded to as begun. So with the two departments of the Divine work here described. To say that science and scripture do not agree in their respective accounts of these, because the latter speaks of them generally and as two great wholes, whilst the former sets them forth in detail and as they were carried on contemporaneously from period to period, were to be guilty of like unreasonableness in the treatment of the words of the sacred author.

3. At this point in the narrative we are led to contemplate the first grand transition from inorganic to organic matter. In imagination we are carried far back in the physical history of the globe. For many ages the great work had proceeded without sign of any form of life. At last, in some tiny shape, long before any human mind existed to observe the result or to trace the processes in which that result had issued, the first living structure was produced. If seen and marked, it might have seemed most insignificant, not for one moment to be compared

with any one of those externally greater effects of the mere exercise of physical power which may have occurred at the same time. Yet it was the beginning of what we may call a vast empire, now filling the whole earth, and consisting of many kingdoms full of the most varied and ever-varying creations of the Author of all life.

4. We have already treated of one great mystery,—the mystery of creation. How any substance or subsistence, material or spiritual, should rise into being where no such substance or subsistence was before, we cannot tell, nor are we likely ever to comprehend. We can only say, the almighty God so willed, and, as a mysterious result, so it was. Here, again, we come face to face with another mighty mystery, the origin of life, or the rise into existence of life where no such life existed before. Scientific minds have differed widely, and never did they differ more decidedly than now, with respect to this most important subject, the origin of life, whether vegetable as here implied, or animal as again to be considered. Over that origin, notwithstanding scientific efforts incomparably greater than those of any previous age, the veil remains, and seems as thick and impenetrable as ever. This is acknowledged by the highest names amongst the most strenuous and most accomplished upholders of the law of development.

By the great majority of the most enlightened of the present day, the great law, that life alone produces life, is held to be universal and unexceptional. Thus must we be content to acknowledge the profound mystery. As in the more general case of creation, we must, yet at least, continue simply to say, the almighty God so willed, and, as a mysterious result, so it was.

5. Without further reference to this matter, or to the like important question of the production of the countless forms of vegetable life, we may here remark, that the narrative, though not expressly conveying the idea of progressive creation or development, at least fully admits of freest interpretation. We

shall find, when treating of the opening verses of the second section, this idea of progressive work clearly introduced.

In the meantime we may simply note one or two things which these verses suggest, when they are translated very closely, thus :—"These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were (being) created," or when they were in course of creation, "in the day of Jehovah God's making earth and heaven. And no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field yet grew;" and so on. Reserving the whole for separate consideration, we may observe,—*First*: that the period referred to is that of the entire work of the progressive creation of the heavens and the earth, that is, of the universe; *secondly*: that, included in this period, a shorter one is alluded to, that of the progressive development of the dry land and terrestrial atmosphere, "in the day of Jehovah God's making earth and heaven,"—or, while the formative work was in progress; *thirdly*: we are informed that then "no plant of the field was yet in the earth;" by which we understand that, in the earlier period of the development of the vegetable kingdom, and while the work of forming the solid surface of the globe was in the earlier stages of advancement, the higher species of plants and herbs, those of human use and culture, were not yet introduced, the lower and less highly organised having thus been of earlier creation; *fourthly*: without here giving any proof of the correctness of this, we simply repeat, that the idea of progress is in this way distinctly implied; *fifthly*: whilst there is nothing stated in these verses inconsistent with the portion of the first chapter which we are now considering, the indefiniteness of that chapter, so suitable to it as designedly of non-scientific character, leaves us perfectly free to accept, not only this more express information of the second chapter, but also all the wonderful disclosures of science with respect to the remote origin of the vegetable kingdom on the one hand, and with respect to its slow, gradual, and infinitely diversified development on the other.

VII.

“And God said, Let there be Luminaries in the expanse of the heaven, to divide between the day and the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years. And let them be for luminaries in the expanse of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made the two great Luminaries,—the greater luminary to rule the day, and the lesser luminary to rule the night,—and the Stars. And God set them in the expanse of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide between the light and the darkness: and God saw that (it was) good. And there was evening, and there was morning—a fourth day.”

1. In treating of the production of light, we were led to refer pretty fully to the creation of these heavenly bodies; so that we may now be the more brief. We need hardly say, that here the description is specially addressed to the eye. The sun and moon are said to have been placed in the firmament, or, in fact, to have been put where they seem to be by the sense of sight, and not in the real positions which they have been proved by science to occupy. Nor, in such a narrative, could they have been more appropriately spoken of. Even by those familiar with the truth, they continue to be spoken of in virtually the same manner still. To all intents, they are little else than simply affirmed to have been made by the Divine Being, and that for the main purpose of giving light, and for the subordinate purpose of serving “for signs and for seasons, and for days and years.” The whole is written with exclusive relation to the earth and man. We must not, however, infer that these wonderful objects are supposed to fulfil no other purpose or purposes. The more palpable are referred to. A part for the whole is spoken of. The allusion to signs and seasons illustrates the purely human design of the record. We need not, therefore, exclude any portion of physical truth from the just interpretation of the paragraph. To the part referred to we may freely go on to add the remaining portions as we become acquainted with them. Here, as elsewhere, the blanks of Scripture are left to be filled up by the disclosures of science.

To the endless wonders of light must be added the like countless marvels of heat. For the apparent movements of the sun we must substitute the real movements of the earth. The great central orb must be contemplated as at once, by the laws of gravitation the Ruler, and by the laws of light and heat the Servant, of the earth and of the other bodies of the system.

2. In the original, it is not said precisely as in the English version, "He made the stars also," as if the words were used parenthetically, and as if we were thus warranted to regard the sacred writer as virtually excluding the stars as no real part of the six days' work, and thus as suggesting no such difficulties as the immensity of the stellar universe naturally suggests. However, we seem grammatically bound to connect "the stars," as well as "the two great luminaries," with the verb "made," though the intervening statement has removed the former to so great a distance from the latter as to have suggested the idea of a parenthetical clause, if not of an imperfectly formed additional sentence. It must be admitted that so brief and merely passing a reference to so grand and imposing a part of the visible creation does to no small extent favour the theory of interpretation, according to which the six days' work is confined to the aerial heaven, and the earth along with the luminaries here alluded to. However, grammatical construction appears fairly to determine otherwise. Nor can this be any real loss to the interest of a simple and true exegesis. These countless spheres of light do seem included in "the heavens and the earth" of the first verse, the Bible as well as the common expression for the entire universe. Besides, that entire universe seems evidently regarded throughout Scripture as referred to in this opening portion. Nay, on any other supposition, the history would seem defective. Let us rather infer, that the remarkable brevity in question was designed, as it is certainly fitted, to indicate, that it was no part of the writer's work to convey instruction as to the universe at large,

and that therefore the future discovery of its inconceivable vastness should not be permitted to cast the shadow of a doubt as to the truth of what it was his part to record or to teach. It was certainly proper, that universal creation should be ascribed to God on the one hand, and that the worship of such beautiful and mysterious objects should be prevented on the other.

3. We need hardly advert to the order in which the celestial bodies are placed in the sacred record, as we have largely treated of it elsewhere, and as we have shown that the indeterminate expression, "a fourth day," leaves us free to regard the real order as that which science alone can help us to discover. Nor need we add to what we have said of the reasons for so early a reference to the production of the light. We may merely say, that, though no other and better reasons could have been assigned, it might have been sufficient to have observed, that as the sun is here spoken of as the luminary of the earth, however abundant light he may have long sent forth, not till he was finally and perfectly prepared to yield the appropriate normal supply could the Divine work be said to have been really done.

We repeat that here and in every other paragraph, the Divine work is affirmed to be finally accomplished, and not to be merely begun or partially carried on. Accordingly, during the long period which we may view as required for this preparatory work, not only might the earth be illuminated, but for ages organic life, vegetable and animal, may have existed and multiplied both in the sea and on the dry land. In fact, this matter is closely connected with another, the real constitution of the sun viewed as a source of light, as to which the most enlightened minds have yet much to learn or rather to discover.

Various most ingenious and plausible theories have been framed and supported with wonderful power. "After a skilful examination of the solar spots," says Sir D. Brewster, "Sir W.

Herschel has made it highly probable, if not certain, that the light of the sun issues from an outer stratum of self-luminous or phosphoric clouds, beneath which there is a second stratum of clouds of inferior brightness, which is intended to protect the solid and opaque body of the sun from the intense brilliancy and heat of the luminous clouds."

In his "Astronomy," the younger Herschel has suggested a different theory. "Electricity traversing exceedingly rarified air or vapour gives out light, and doubtless also heat. May not a continued current of electric matter be constantly circulating in the sun's immediate neighbourhood, or traversing the planetary spaces, and exciting in the upper regions of its atmosphere those phenomena of which, on however diminutive a scale, we have yet an unequivocal manifestation in our aurora borealis?"

In his "Heat, a Mode of Motion," Professor Tyndall has given some account of the meteoric theory. "In the fall of asteroids we find the means of producing the solar light and heat. It may be contended that this showering down of matter necessitates the growth of the sun; it does so, but the quantity necessary to maintain the observed calorific emission for 4000 years would defeat the scrutiny of our best instruments. If the earth struck the sun, it would utterly vanish from perception; but the heat developed by its shock would cover the expenditure of a century. . . . Without doubt the whole surface of the sun displays an unbroken ocean of molten matter. On this ocean rests an atmosphere of glowing gas—a flame atmosphere, or photosphere. But gaseous substances emit, even when their temperature is very high, only a feeble light. Hence, it is probable that the dazzling white light of the sun comes to us, through the atmosphere, from the denser matter underneath." Professor Tyndall, whilst not pledging himself to this theory, says, "It is a noble speculation; and depend upon it, the true theory, if this or some form of it be not the true one, will not appear less wild or less astounding." He adds, "Helmholtz,

an eminent German physiologist, physicist, and mathematician, takes a somewhat different view of the origin and maintenance of solar light and heat. He starts from the nebular hypothesis of Laplace, and assuming the nebulous matter, in the first instance, to have been of extreme tenuity, he determines the amount of heat generated by its condensation to the present solar system. Supposing the specific heat of the condensing mass to be the same as water, then the heat of condensation would be sufficient to raise the temperature 28,000,000° Cent. By far the greater part of this heat was wasted ages ago, in space. . . . Helmholtz supposes this condensation to continue; that a virtual falling down of the superficial portions of the sun towards the centre still takes place, a continual development of heat being the result. However this may be, he shows by calculation that the shrinking of the sun's diameter by $\frac{1}{10,000}$ of its present length would generate an amount of heat competent to cover the solar emission for 2000 years, while the condensation of the sun from its present mean density to that of the earth would have its equivalent in an amount of heat competent to cover the present solar emission for 17,000,000 years."

We thus allude to these theories, not merely because they reveal the thoughts of certain of our greatest minds with regard to the subject in hand, but because they tend to illustrate that subject, and to prove at least the necessity of such a long period of solar preparation as we have supposed, and thus to indicate more than the bare probability of what we have said, that, long before this Divine work was finished, the earth may have been abundantly, possibly more than sufficiently, supplied with light and heat, whilst both vegetable and animal life may have existed and multiplied in the sea and on the dry land.

4. We have said that the sun may in one sense be called the ruler, and in another the servant of the earth: the ruler as, according to the laws of gravity, regulating the whole system

of which he is the centre ; the servant as, according to the laws of light and heat, ever doing the greatest and most varied amount of absolutely necessary work, or ever supplying the infinitely numerous and diversified wants of our world. In fact, in the former sense, though central, vast, and controlling, he is rather servant than king ; so keeping the earth in its proper place as to secure for it all the advantages which flow from him viewed in the second sense, as rendering service alone. Thoroughly groundless indeed is all objection to the sacred record as apparently reversing the order of nature with regard to the relative greatness and importance of the two bodies in question, the earth and the sun. On this point the record is simply silent.

It is one thing to affirm that the sun was made for the purpose of illuminating the earth, and quite another to say, as the objection implies, that he was made for no other purpose, or that in point of relative greatness and importance he is inferior to the earth. Still, had this latter been actually affirmed, if by greatness was not meant mere bulk, we think it would have been hard, if it would not be utterly impossible, to prove the affirmation incorrect. If we set aside the first of the theories just alluded to, in harmony with which the sun was supposed, by its illustrious author and by others, to be not improbably a habitable globe, but as to the tenability of which it seems sufficient to say that the chemistry of the present day will assuredly dispute the possibility of an ocean of cloud or vapour being the sufficient, far less the perennial source of such an enormous amount of radiant energy,—then we must conclude that, to give light and heat, to supply this earth with all the conditions of life and its endless blessings, is really the highest end of the solar orb with which we are acquainted.

That the sun is inhabited or inhabitable certainly cannot be proved, and seems in the last degree improbable. Most assuredly the sun was made for the earth, and not the earth for the sun ; and, as assuredly, we may add, that both sun and

earth were made for man, as, let us add, all were made by God and for God. We have no sufficient evidence of any other planet being certainly inhabited, however much may be said analogically in favour of the habitation of Mars. In his "Plurality of Worlds" the late Dr. Whewell, whilst doubtless carrying his argument too far with respect to the visible universe, appears to have at least shown cause for not a little doubt as to the foundation for the common belief with respect to the extent of the habitability of the solar system ; in fact, as to whether any planet save this is really occupied by a race of intelligent moral beings. We seem to have reason to conclude that the earth is the moral, though far from being the physical, centre of the solar system, as London is the political, though by no means the geographical, centre of the British Empire.

5. But what of the starry heavens ? Does not Scripture at least magnify the earth beyond all reasonable bounds in comparison with them ? Whatever the narrative says of the sun, it certainly does not say of them that they were made for the earth. As we have seen, they are barely introduced into the record. Their Divine origin is simply noted. Of their immensity, the sacred writer was doubtless profoundly ignorant. In these modern times, the idea of that immensity has been felt, as anciently by the Psalmist, to reveal the comparative insignificance of man, if it has not always, as in his case, been accompanied with a like sense of the infinite majesty of God. Assuredly, the more intensely we meditate on the revelations of the telescope, especially as they are presented to the imagination by the calculations of physical astronomy, the more thoroughly are we overpowered with a sense of the littleness as well of man as of his dwelling-place, and feel as if we were too appropriately represented by the ant-hill and its busy, tiny inhabitants.

In view of the universe of science, the question has again and again arisen : Can we suppose the Bible true as to what it

affirms of the moral importance of man on the one hand, and of the mighty interest which the infinite Creator has taken in his well-being on the other? This question has been dealt with in various ways. Of course the best and ultimate way must be that of simply inquiring whether the Bible is true or not. Dr. Chalmers, in his "Astronomical Discourses," made most eloquent and ingenious use of the disclosures of the microscope, to prove that the Divine interest and power condescended to create countless worlds of most wonderful constitution, and yet in some sense infinitely little. We cannot then infer, that this world, with its race of moral beings, can fail to be the object of Divine interest which it is declared to be in Scripture. Dr. Whewell, in the work above referred to, has endeavoured to show that we have no reason to believe in the existence of the many races of rational beings which have been supposed to people the numberless worlds of space, and therefore that we have thus no reason for supposing any other such race as ours, at once requiring and receiving such means of moral and spiritual good as we find revealed in the sacred volume. Sir David Brewster, in his "More Worlds than One," has ably contended for the habitability of the countless worlds referred to, and would meet every such objection as that in question by maintaining that the wider and more varied the intellectual and moral empire of God, the more benevolent and glorious does God appear. As to the special point, that pertaining to the redemptive scheme, Sir David maintains, that we require neither to suppose that other races have remained sinless, nor to believe that the work of Christ cannot extend its saving benefits to other races in other realms of space.

6. Be this as it may, we certainly should never allow such knowledge as Scripture may convey to our minds with respect to the Divine treatment of man, or such knowledge of man's nature and destiny as we may obtain from any source to be set aside by our ignorance of other regions of the universe, or

of the Divine treatment of other and more or less numerous orders of created beings. The universal Creator can perfectly well take care of all. One thing we may well know, that He does not, through care for other worlds or other races, show any want of will or power to take care of ours.

Still, practically, and as already said, the idea of the vastness of the material universe is of real overwhelming power. We can hardly think or meditate without feeling it. Happily, the sacred volume supplies the place of both microscope and telescope with respect to the moral universe. It magnifies what is near and what we are apt to deem insignificant, and it reveals what is too remote, whether in space or in time, to be otherwise within range of our spiritual sight. It does what science too often fails altogether to do, it exalts the moral almost infinitely above the physical. In revealing the Divine Fatherhood, it gives the true key to the essential dignity and worth of mankind. In planting the Cross in the midst of this world, it gives a light to all with respect to both God and the universe, more precious than all the light which, apart from it, science can ever bring to the children of men. In the moral and spiritual influences of Scripture, and in the culture of the entire man which ever attends the true and faithful discipleship of Him who is the central object of all revelation, we find tokens of the grand purposes of God with respect to the human family. When science combines with Scripture to train and enlighten the Christian, and to fit him for the higher walks and nobler pursuits of life, then we behold living practical proof of what man is intended by the universal Creator to be or to become; not the mere inhabitant of this little earth in which alone his bodily frame exists and moves, but the real denizen of the universe itself, at least as far as his true knowledge may enable him in mind and spirit to travel. As he holds high and holy converse with God on the one hand, and as he traverses the great creation on the other, man gives proof indisputable of his created and destined greatness. It has been said, "There is

nothing great on earth but man, and nothing great in man but mind." Kant did well to associate the moral sense in man with the grandeur of the starry firmament. Let us not unduly magnify mere bulk—bulk of matter, a multitude of atoms, or a multitude of worlds ; let us rather exalt mind and moral worth. Then, whilst science unveils the vastness and variety of the material creation, we shall find Scripture, in perfect harmony with it, unveiling the excellence of renewed man as part of a like vast and varied moral universe.

VIII.

"And God said, Let the waters teem with the moving creature that has life ; and let fowl fly above the earth before the face of the expanse of the heaven. And God created great monsters, and every living thing that moveth, with which the waters teem, after their kind, and every winged fowl after its kind : and God saw that (it was) good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let the fowl multiply in the earth. And there was evening, and there was morning—a fifth day."

1. Here we may glance at the work pictorially set forth as up to this point actually finished. The home of man and of the living creatures of which he is the head is now described as if complete. The inhabitants alone are wanting. The three regions of water, air, and earth are prepared to receive them. The vegetable kingdom in all its parts, essentially useful as well as infinitely ornamental, everywhere flourishes. Nay, as if to complete the preparatory work, the great luminaries have been introduced. On the principle of an artistic rather than a scientific description, they could not have been introduced at any more appropriate point. The remaining part of the history is, in like appropriate order, devoted to the introduction of the varied classes of inhabitants,—those of the waters, those of the air, and those of the dry land.

2. In this paragraph the two former are alluded to, fishes and birds. It has been inferred from their relative position in the

narrative together with the form of the English version, that these two great classes were regarded as derivatively connected in the mind of the writer, and thus that even here we have some trace of the law of evolution or development. A slight change in the translation removes all ground for this inference: "Let the waters teem, etc. ; and let fowl fly above the earth," etc.

3. We need not here allude to the numerous and diversified species referred to. The infinite productiveness of the tribes of the deep could not be more vividly described. Though various kinds are alluded to, we must look here for no full or exact classification. We need not say, the same holds good of the winged creatures. Some suppose that the insect tribes are included in the one case, as all forms of life inhabiting the waters are intended in the other. We cannot far err in assuming that reference is at least virtually made to every kind of life within the regions of air and water here spoken of.

4. The two classes are represented as making together one Divine day's work. According to our general principle of interpretation, this implies no necessary contemporaneous production. Nor does it imply aught inconsistent with the remote rise and long continued progress of these sub-kingdoms of nature.

Here, as elsewhere, we are left to fill up the blanks by means of the record of the rocks, according to which we find the development of animal life running, as we have already said, parallel with that of the vegetable species. We may well regard the waters as really the first abode of life, whether vegetable or animal. How, and in what form or forms that life began, neither science nor Scripture reveals. Possibly, for ages it continued such that, even with the aid of microscopic inspection, no naturalist of the present day could have decided to which kingdom it belonged. Whilst we are here told of distinctively animal life, and whilst, in almost all instances, it is easily distinguishable from vegetable, it is not a little diffi-

cult to give a satisfactory definition of the two, or, in fact, to draw a line through that point at which the kingdoms may be said to touch and yet not to unite or to occupy common territory. As if to indicate such a common region, the descriptive name, Zoophyte, has long been used. However figurative this usage, a real connection between the two kingdoms is maintained. Professor Owen, in his "Invertebrate Animals," remarks, "Thus the groups of characters that are essential to the true definition of a plant and an animal interdigitate, so to speak, in that low department of the organic world from which the two great branches rise and diverge. Every naturalist or physiologist is at liberty, of course, to adopt any one of the characters that have been supposed to divide the two kingdoms ; but the boundary, so defined, will be artificial, and each different character will bisect the debatable ground in a different latitude of the organic world." "Animals and plants, then, are not two natural divisions, but are specialised members of one and the same great group of organised beings."

However they may thus run into one another, like the adjoining colours of the rainbow, they soon appear easily distinguishable, and finally become exceedingly unlike. Practically, they may be regarded, as they have ever been, as perfectly distinct. Though in many of the lower forms they may be indistinguishable, they may not therefore be identical. In another volume, the same author observes, "A perch, a newt, a dog, a man, does not begin to be such only when the embryologist may discern the dawns of their respective specific characters." Now, in the case of the organisms in question, may not the same principle hold good ; may they not belong rather to one class than to the other, though such dawns of differentiating characters may in their case never arise? Be this as it may, not only great, but very mysterious is the difference between the two fully developed forms of life. In the production of that here alluded to we find another great mystery. Once more we must simply acknowledge the operation of no

known or ordinary cause, and thus fall back upon the incomprehensible operations of the Almighty Will.

5. The sacred writer here, for the first time, or after the first reference to animal existence, indicates, not only the Divine complacency in the goodness of the work done, but the Divine pleasure in the happiness created, and the Divine desire that that happiness should abound and be perpetuated. The character of God is thus revealed. He wills well to all His creatures. He delights to behold all regions of the earth full of life and of enjoyment. The humblest creatures are not beneath His notice. The birds, whose creation is here recorded, flying at His command, cannot, as the great Teacher assures us, "fall to the earth without His will." How wonderfully all have multiplied and continue to fill both sea and air with signs of their happiness and with tokens of His power and pleasure! They everywhere and always tell of the exhaustless treasures of His creative skill and providential goodness.

IX.

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after its kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after its kind : and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after its kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth (on) the ground after its kind : and God saw that (it was) good."

1. With the exception of man, such was the work of the last of the six Divine days. It embraces all kinds of land animals, except the winged tribes already alluded to. They are grouped together, not according to organic relationship, but according to mere local habitation, exemplifying the principle which runs through the whole chapter, of artificial rather than scientific arrangement. It might indeed be said that the successive order of fishes, birds, mammals generally, man as

supreme, clearly sets forth an order at once scientific and correct. Still, between the higher and lower creatures the bond is local, though the three regions may be viewed as so arranged as thus to suggest an ascending scale of being, and to provide for the introduction of man as the last and highest work of God.

2. The expression, "the beast of the earth," used as it is along with the term "cattle," would seem to include, if not to refer exclusively, to all sorts of wild carnivorous animals. However, this view is not without difficulty. In the 30th verse it is said, "and to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein (there is) life, (I have given) every green herb for food," as if all were herbivorous, and as if the theory, which used to be not unfrequently maintained, that no mutually destructive creatures and no law of death belonged to the primitive world, were not without some colour of truth. As such a theory is inconsistent with fact and with Scripture, we may be assured that here it can find no real support. It will be observed, that here the cattle are not alluded to, showing that "beast of the earth" is used of them and of other animals inclusively. We may, therefore, regard this verse as simply stating generally that law of nature according to which animal life is said to depend on vegetable life for its existence or for its normal support. Though to be ranked under this descriptive name, the carnivorous animals are to be viewed as not expressly alluded to. In the second chapter, we find the slightly altered expression, "beast of the field," used precisely in the same way as that employed in this; that is to say, in one clause along with the term "cattle," and in another without it. In both cases we must suppose a reference to all sorts of animals, carnivorous as well as herbivorous, unless we are prepared to exclude from the record even all implied allusion to the creation of the former, which we cannot do, so long as we

read, in the third chapter, of the serpent being more cunning than "any beast of the field."

3. This passage, then, is to be interpreted in keeping with the disclosures of geology and general teachings of science, that the world of irrational creatures was originally constituted as it now exists, the law of death having reigned as naturally and as universally before as since the introduction of human sin, and being in no way traceable to the conduct of man or to the curse of God. Most absurdly has the reverse of this been maintained, especially on the ground of such passages as that in which the Apostle Paul traces the entrance of death to the entrance of sin, but in which, treating exclusively of man, the only being on earth capable of either righteousness or sin, of either good or ill desert, he refers as exclusively to death in its relation to man.

X.

"And God said, Let Us make Man in Our Image, after Our Likeness ; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the heaven, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created man in His image, in the image of God created He him ; male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it ; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the heaven, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every green herb bearing seed, which (is) upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which (is) the fruit of a tree yielding seed ; to you it shall be for food ; and to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the heaven, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein (there is) life, (I have given) every green herb for food ; and it was so. And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, (it was) very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day."

1. The earth has now been described as fitly framed and richly furnished to be the home of man. Still, the intended tenant has not yet taken or claimed possession. The Divine inheritance is provided, but the Divine heir has not yet ar-

rived. Hence the last great work of God recorded in this history of creation. The words used awaken highest expectation. No command is given to any subordinate agent,—to the waters or to the earth. God says,—“Let Us make Man.”

2. Why the plural number should have been thus employed, more than one reason has been assigned. We need not say, the more common is that which implies a designed allusion to the mysterious nature of the Godhead or to the doctrine of a Divine tri-personality held to be referred to in more than one passage in the Old Testament, and to be undoubtedly revealed in many parts of the New. It has, again, been long and often contended that here we have simply an instance of the plural of majesty or of excellence. Though it has been maintained, that an exactly parallel case cannot be found, and that at least we have no proof of such a usage of so early a date as the time of Moses, we are not, without further evidence, prepared to lay so much stress on this undoubtedly remarkable expression. However, a still more remarkable use of the plural occurs in chapter iii. 22 : “And Jehovah God said, The man is become as one of Us,” where, to say the least, a mysterious plurality does seem naturally suggested. Still, we could only acknowledge our ignorance of the reason for such a mode of speech, if the Scriptures contained no doctrine which seemed to supply a proper key. Finding such a doctrine, not obscurely hinted at, but clearly revealed and inseparably interwoven with other important doctrines, we do think it almost a needless work to endeavour otherwise and less simply to account for what appears so easily and so Scripturally to be thus accounted for.

We cannot at all accept the view of those who suppose the words addressed to the angels or spoken of them. The great unlikelihood of this apart, the sacred writer immediately passes from the plural to the singular number, a fact perfectly consistent with the mystery of Divine tri-unity, but as thoroughly

inconsistent with a reference to more than one being or to both God and angels as supposed: "And God created man in His (own) image, in the image of God created He him."

The more common view, then, on the whole commends itself. The strongest objection to this is, or at least appears to be, that we can hardly believe that so profound a mystery would be so early alluded to; that Divine truth was gradually and from small beginnings revealed to man; and that therefore we cannot suppose the very highest doctrines here introduced. We have certainly no intelligible revelation as to the Divine nature in the words in question, and it would be more than unwise to appeal to them for any argumentative purpose. At the same time it does not seem by any means impossible that the first feeble rays of the sun of revealed truth should make from the very beginning some faint impression on the volume of inspiration. Some trace of this seems to have been clearly visible to the eye of the author of the fourth gospel, as seems evident from the opening words, already quoted: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God"—words apparently expressive of Divine unity and of Divine plurality. So the words which follow: "All things were made by Him," etc., indicating the presence of the Word at the creation of all things, nay, that the Word was the universal Creator. Again: the reference to the Spirit of God as brooding over the great deep at least consists with this idea of Divine plurality, as well of creative agency as of incomprehensible being, apparently involving, obscurely and implicitly only, the full doctrine of one God, afterwards revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Creator of the universe.

3. Though the entire complex constitution of man, material and spiritual, is here referred to, we must not suppose the words employed to imply the idea of the remotest materialistic resemblance. The human body has certainly been "fearfully

and wonderfully made." The celebrated physician Galen happily likened a treatise on anatomy to a hymn of praise to the Creator. For that, however, which is in the highest sense Divine, and in which God has put the beauty and the glory of His own image, we must look to the marvellous and mysterious spiritual inhabitant of that grand yet only material temple. Whatever may be said of the author of this book, and of his knowledge or ignorance of the structure of the globe, or of the magnitude of the universe, all may well acknowledge that here we have one of the sublimest and mightiest utterances to be found in any writing, ancient or modern, and that no man can speak more truly or more highly of the native excellence and dignity of man even in the present day. In fact, in this very ancient history, we find so palpably Divine a picture of man, or so grand a revelation of man to himself, that all may well believe that here we may safely infer the inspiring aid of the Creator.

4. What then, are we to understand by the expressions, "image of God," "likeness of God"? Are they synonymous, or are we to view them in different lights? By some they have been thus viewed. We may quote the following from Dr. Abbott's very able "Cambridge Sermons": "You may have observed that I have twice distinguished between the 'image' and the 'likeness,' the past creation and the future intention of the Creator. Where one is uncertain as to the exact meaning of an author it is frivolous and almost dishonest to base elaborate theories upon a word or phrase. Still, it has always seemed to me that there is something very suggestive in the distinction drawn by Origen between these two words, 'image' and 'likeness.' It might seem to an English reader that the word 'image' implies a stronger resemblance than the word 'likeness'; but this opinion would not, I believe, be justified by the original Hebrew, nor is it the interpretation adopted by Origen. God made man according to His image;

that is to say, with a certain degree of resemblance to Himself; and He intended and intends to make man according to His likeness. '*Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness*'; that was the intention. But the Bible goes on to describe only the first part of the intention as being fulfilled: '*so God created man in His own image*'; but, adds Origen, 'not as yet after His likeness'—that was to be the work of centuries. Man was made from the first in the *image* of God, with Divine potentialities of reason and love; but ages were needed, and will yet be needed, before these potentialities shall become realities and man shall be conformed in all respects to the Divine *likeness*. I repeat that I do not use this view of Origen as an argument, but rather as a suggestive illustration. Viewed as an illustration, it suggests progress, it suggests development, and seems to prepare the way for the scientific theory which we are now to consider."

Dr. Abbott proceeds to develop with great ingenuity this theory of the gradual advancement of man, involving the idea of what he views as such a fall of humanity as prepared the way for redemption. In view of the present speculative aspects of science, this is certainly very ingenious, and may meet the case of various minds. However, we can neither regard the Bible generally, nor the words here specially dealt with, as at all supporting the idea of a merely partial created resemblance. To all intents the words are equivalent. To prove this, we have simply to consider the usage of the sacred writer. Thus, in allusion to this very passage, he says (chap. v. 3), that Adam "began (a son) in his own likeness, after his image," where "likeness" is put before "image," and where it would be hard indeed for even Origen to draw a distinction.

5. What, then is meant by "image" or "likeness" of God? Assuredly an immense amount of the profoundest and most precious truth is implied. A spiritual nature in some sense resembling that of God is involved, however at the same time

inconceivably differing from it. Jesus said truly and sublimely, "God is a Spirit;" and we may add, that man has a spirit, or that he is a spiritual being. As such he is endowed with manifold affections, intellectual powers, moral faculties, a mysterious will whose freedom is a necessary condition of all responsible action, and what we may call generally a religious or Divine nature peculiarly connecting him with his Maker, or, as we may say, instinctively connecting him with his Divine Parent, as, in his early days, he is instinctively connected with his human parents, and implying a filial nature in the one case as in the other. These, or such as these, may be said to form the constituents of Reason taken in the fullest sense. Possessing these, man, as a reasonable being, reflects the image of his Divine Creator, and, as a true son, bears a likeness to his Divine Father.

6. The simple possession of these may be said to imply a real and natural resemblance to God, whatever the prevailing bent of the heart or moral characteristics of the life, just as a son may bear a real and marked likeness to his father, however unlike in character and conduct. Though morally and spiritually depraved, man may be thus most correctly spoken of as retaining the image of God. Here, however, much more is meant than the mere possession of faculties, capabilities, and potentialities of any description. As the words relate to man as he came from the creative hand, and as they are evidently interpreted throughout Scripture, they suggest the idea of an actual resemblance in point of moral goodness,—in love as well as knowledge, in holiness, righteousness, and truth; that is to say, the likeness, to use the ordinary expression, must have been moral as well as natural. We cannot accept the notion that the mere faculties were granted, and that he was left to make himself holy or righteous by the holy or righteous exercise or use of them. We rather think, that he was so inspired originally and actually, as at the outset of life to use all his

powers and resources in the spirit of holiness, righteousness, and truth. Hence, apparently in the light of reason, certainly in that of Scripture, we may and do speak of man's primitive state as righteous and holy. Hence, too, the Christian is said to "put on the new man, which after God (or, as the words appear to mean, which after the image or likeness of God) is created in righteousness and true holiness." Through sin, the moral but not the natural likeness to God was lost : with the return of holiness the moral is restored.

7. Thus, then, we find, on the very first page of this ancient record a clear statement implying, if not expressing, the grand correlative doctrines of the Fatherhood of God and of the Sonship of man, and indicating the Divine dignity and glory of the latter. If we may so say, the Creative Fatherhood of God and Sonship of man are here as truly revealed as are the Redemptive Fatherhood of the Former and Sonship of the latter in any part of the sacred volume, even in the words of Christ and His apostles. Often has the Bible been said to contain degrading ideas of mankind. Such ideas pertain to sin and the results of sin. But, whether we think of the likeness here alluded to, or of the relationship which it implies; nay, whether we think of the creation or of the redemption of man,—its disclosures raise it immeasurably above every other book. The words here used, and the works which they record, may well be viewed as of the same Divine origin.

8. We have elsewhere said that, Divine agency being fully granted, so far as the mere form of words is concerned, the record might be interpreted either of a direct or immediate act of creation as it has been almost universally, or in keeping with the idea of evolution or development, as some have more recently proposed to interpret it. We are here simply informed of the fact of creation, but not of the method of Divine operation. The case is considerably different with the account

in the second chapter, and especially with the reference to the formation of the woman.

We cannot here do more than allude to the theory of evolution, which has been of late so ably unfolded and upheld by a growing number of our highest minds. Of one thing all who believe the Bible must ever be persuaded, that, in so far as that or any other theory may in any way involve the denial of the continued active relationship of the great Creator to universal creation, it will sooner or later be found to be inconsistent with truth. The nature of that relationship we may be absolutely unable to comprehend. We have been referring to certain points of resemblance between man and his Maker. These are perfectly consistent with the existence of the mightiest possible contrast between them. In reasoning concerning the creation, the construction and the government of this world, or of the universe as a whole, we must keep in view both contrast and resemblance. For example, whilst we remember the resemblance between the Divine and human personality, between the Divine and human will, let us not forget the contrast between the immediate and absolutely unsearchable nature of the agency of the one, and the mediate and at least partially known agency of the other. Let us not set aside all proof of Divine operation which may seem to involve analogy between the Divine and the human, and then deny the probability or the possibility of what may be affirmed of the Divine agency on the sole ground of its not appearing probable or possible to our minds, that is to say, of its not being consistent with the very analogy which has just been set aside.

In his "Christianity and Morality," Mr. Wace has admirably expressed the idea which we wish to convey: "But is it difficult to perceive that these daring contradictions are the very safeguard against that impure and Anthropomorphic Theism of which the inspired writers are accused? The real Anthropomorphism consists in setting up an ideal which is consistent according to a human standard. There is, for instance, no

Anthropomorphism greater than that of some men of science, who can only conceive of God as standing in the same relation to nature as that in which they stand themselves—unable, that is, to act except in submission to its ordinary laws. But the Scriptures take everything that is grand and beautiful, in the world without and in the world within, in the firmament or in the heart, and fuse them together into one glorious image of God. Attempt to ascribe them all to a human being, and they will be mutually destructive; but in God the realities of which they are the reflections may subsist in an essential harmony. It is precisely because the Scriptures are not really Anthropomorphic that they venture on such bold flights of apparent Anthropomorphism. They illustrate the Divine nature in the only way in which it can be illustrated by human analogies; and then immediately add, in the words of the text, ‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.’”

As we have already said, if the son be like the father, the father must be like the son; so that to reason analogically from what we know of the one to what we may infer of the other may imply no false anthropomorphism, though, because of possible contrast, the greatest caution should be observed. We might have said, if the father be unlike the son, the son must be unlike the father. In this case, to reason analogically is to incur the charge of a very groundless anthropomorphism. Thus the idea of adaptation or design, of right and wrong, is virtually the same in all minds, Divine or human. Here we have a real basis for analogical inference or reasoning. The potential relationship, however, of mind or of will to matter or to other minds may be vastly different in Creator and creature, in God and man. Here man may be of most limited power or absolutely powerless, whilst God is in the fullest sense Almighty. Here, accordingly, it becomes us to be careful as to

our denial of either the Will or the Power of God to do what may seem to our minds either unlikely or impossible.

Most assuredly ought all to avoid that systematic denial of all continued Divine agency so persistently maintained by not a few. A false anthropomorphism lies, however imperceptibly, at the root of much of that marked opposition which obtains in some quarters to all belief in the miraculous or supernatural. It is undoubtedly the part of science to trace the current of nature or of natural causation, and that alone; but it is no part of science to affirm or to deny the supernatural, or to determine the bounds or the methods of Divine operation. If God has been pleased to create a being or a race in His own image, and so to assume the position and the character of a parent, He may be fairly expected to act in keeping with that position and character, and thus not to exalt the physical above the moral, but to subordinate the whole system of physical causation to the promotion of the real interests of such as, in virtue of filial relationship, may justly confide in Him as "in a faithful Creator." Whatever may truly promote the real interests of the Divine Family, the Divine Father can never regard as beneath His Divine dignity to secure.

Here we find Divine Fatherhood and Divine Sonship clearly revealed. Unless, therefore, we are prepared to set aside the whole volume of Scripture, and so to regard the endeavour to trace the harmony of Scripture and science as utterly vain, we must not refuse to admit the truth of statements which imply a spirit and an agency on the part of God which, on the sole ground of science, if we have no right to affirm, we have as little right to deny. Thus, whatever view may be taken of the creation of man, if we would regard him as perfectly prepared to enter that state of what we may call tuitional probation, or probational tuition, referred to in the second chapter, we think we must suppose, not merely the possession of a moral nature, but the positive development of such moral character, or the real presence of such Divine agency, as would seem necessary,

if we are to regard success as undoubtedly possible on the one hand, or if failure can really be reckoned a sin or a fall and therefore justly punishable on the other. In fact, we must not allow those ideas of the Divine Greatness which science may well inspire to set aside those ideas of the Divine Goodness or of Paternal Condescension which Scripture so richly conveys. In studying what here relates to primitive man, if we would not yield to doubt we must hold fast these two sets of ideas, and must be satisfied with no half conception of the Divine Being, either that He is infinitely Great or that He is infinitely Good, but must rise to the full conception of His character as both.

9. We shall add only one other general remark as to the creation of man. Man is here presented as the crowning work of God. All may, in a general sense, be said to have been made for him, as he may be said, in the highest sense, to have been made for God. He is undoubtedly at the head of the whole animal creation. Contemplated in the light of science, the almost infinite series of creative acts, mediate or immediate, by which the whole sum of irrational creatures was, through measureless time, gradually brought into being, seem, on the one side, very grand and wonderful, and yet, on the other, fitted to awaken no adequate or delightful conception of the character of the great Creator till his last and greatest Work is done. Only then do we behold a creature really capable whether of personally knowing or of practically revealing the all-perfect as well as all-powerful Creator. What was said of the second Adam may be said, though in an inferior sense, of the first, "He that hath the Son hath the Father." When, in the first man, the visible image of the invisible God appeared, the Divine Fatherhood was revealed. Thus was the real character, the very heart of God, unveiled. The Uncreated Father thus made known His eternal purpose to be surrounded with a created family. Without such a family

He could indicate no real bond of loving connection between Himself and His vast creation. In the creation of mind we behold a mighty advance on the creation of matter. In the creation of a family we behold a like mighty advance on the creation of the entire material universe. Here, and here alone, can we find an appropriate sphere for the exercise of mutual love, of Paternal and filial affection.

Till the relationship of Divine Fatherhood and Divine Sonship was thus revealed, however beautiful and diversified, all the forms of life appeared essentially and fitly evanescent. With the establishment of that relationship, and with the manifestation of that mutual love which was naturally associated with it, there was laid the foundation for a more permanent, nay, for a truly eternal existence. The absolute perfection of the eternal One could not possibly be revealed or demonstrated till a being was created in the Divine likeness, and therefore in the highest possible form, and that being fitted and destined to live for ever. Take away from the highest creature either perfect moral character or absolutely eternal existence, and an inconceivably higher work of God remains to be done. We cannot rise to the full conception of Divine Fatherhood without rising to a like full conception of Divine Sonship. Viewed as a Father, God must be supposed to act worthily of so Divine and sacred relationship. Here we may safely reason according to the analogy of human fatherhood. We may fairly draw the sublime and infinite consolatory inference that, as all right-minded parents are so Divinely taught to love their children that none of these would ever die if it were within the parental power to keep them alive, so the Divine parent cannot fail to give immortal life to all His true children, as He has as really the Power which can, as the Love which cannot but will, to preserve them in being for ever. Be the destiny of the material universe what it may, when man was created, the foundation was laid of that family or kingdom which shall constitute literally the most glorious work of God, and which shall literally never pass away.

10. Thus created the Son of God, man is next declared to be the Heir of the world. He is crowned as lord or king of all. His is a universal dominion. All creatures are spoken of as subject to him. His supremacy over them corresponds to that of God over him and all other denizens of the earth, and is also typical of it. It involves not only royal rank, but mighty agency,—physical, intellectual, moral. Man is bound truly and sincerely to acknowledge the absolute dominion of God, as his Creator, Father, and King, and to use all his mental and moral faculties in the rightful subjugation of all God's creatures to his enlightened will and regnant power. It seems fully implied that, so long as he retains his own position of loving and loyal allegiance to the great Supreme, all creatures and all events shall be kept in a state of real subordination to his highest well-being. In this we may find a key to the paradisaic law, or to the nature of the tuition and probation of the Garden of Eden.

11. "And God created man in His image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." Here male and female are placed on the same level, being called by the one common name of man, and being alike said to bear the Divine image. The highest thing which can be affirmed of man is thus also affirmed of woman,—a simple fact, now, through the influence of the book which records it, in such a country as this hardly noticeable, yet which, if ever kept in view and really acted upon, would have prevented infinite evil and degradation to the one sex, and everywhere tended to the elevation and refinement of the other.

12. "And God said, Behold, I have given you every green herb bearing seed, which (is) upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which (is) the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food; and to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the heaven, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein (there is) life, (I have given)

every green herb for food." Whilst referring to the universal dominion of man already alluded to, this paragraph suggests an important inquiry as to the primitive law with respect to human food. The almost universal belief has been, that, by that law, man was restricted to an exclusively vegetable diet. Some, however, have been led to think otherwise.

In his able and valuable work on Genesis, Dr. Quarry has argued that the dominion given to man over the inferior creatures seems to involve the right to use them for all needful purposes, and therefore for food. It has been acutely remarked that, in the case of the fishes, unless for this very purpose, the main, if not the only, end of such dominion must be frustrated. "If verse 28 stood alone," says Quarry, "no one could doubt that the grant for food was included in the universal dominion which it conveys without any restriction whatsoever. But if we consider attentively the succeeding verses, we shall perceive that the grant of the fruits of the earth for the food of man, in verse 29, does not stand in opposition to verse 28, but as an addition to it, the contrast being, not between these two verses, but between verse 29 and verse 30. Besides the dominion over all living things for all uses, food no less than others, man receives, by virtue of his superior intelligence and of his ability to till the ground, grain and other fruits capable of cultivation; while to the inferior animals only the green herb, as naturally produced, is given. And as this last verse does not, of course, exclude the animal food of the carnivorous animals, so neither does the former exclude the animal food of man."

Before reading these acute and well-reasoned arguments, we had put the matter in a somewhat similar light, thus:—We view these and like words previously used of man's dominion as directly expressive of the Divine purpose on the one hand, and as practically written on the constitution of man on the other. Nothing is here said of animal food; and therefore it has been inferred that, according to the original order of things,

the destruction of animal life was not intended. Possibly the best explanation may be found in the fact that vegetable food can alone be well supposed to have been actually used in the first abode of man ; so that it would seem to have been here out of place to have alluded to animal food or to have said more than we find here recorded. At any rate, the omission of all reference to animal food is to be found also in the next verse, where, as we have already seen reason to believe, the existence of carnivorous animals is implied. If then, we do not infer restriction in the latter case from the omission of all reference to the use of animal food, we do not seem warranted to infer restriction from the like omission in the former case. In both cases, we seem thus to have mere omission, not actual restriction. This, however, does appear inconsistent with the parallel passage in chapter ix. We may quote the words : "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them : Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth ; and the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea : into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you ; even as the green herb have I given you all things." This certainly looks very like an addition to the original grant. There seems an undoubted reference to the words under consideration. The natural impression is, that the restriction of the one passage was set aside by the full permission of the other. At the same time, if we view the former as merely omitting all reference to animal food, say, on account of the fact that, in his first habitation, it was not intended that man should use aught else than the fruits of the garden, then we can find in the words no real restriction in the case of our first parents and their posterity after the expulsion from that habitation. Still, there would remain at least the appearance of restriction in the very absence of express permission, an appearance which might have been used in support

of such superstitious reverence for all forms of animal life as has obtained in India for many generations. In this way we may find sufficient reason for the express reference to animal food in chapter ix. By taking this view of the subject, we are able to account for the almost universal impression made by the first study of the two passages, and at the same time to perceive the consistency of both with the implied reference to carnivorous animals in the account of the inferior creatures, and with what we can hardly suppose not to have been indulged in during antediluvian times—the use of animal food.

In all this we have supposed a more direct reference in the ninth chapter to the passage in question than need be admitted. Quarry, accordingly, seems to support the above view, by showing that the reference is by no means so direct as is usually supposed. He says: "If, however, there is no ground for supposing the restriction to have existed in these verses of chapter i., there is as little for thinking that its previous existence is implied in the grant of animal food made in ix. 3. In ix. 1, the command to be fruitful and multiply is repeated in the words of chapter i. Then the command to subdue and have dominion over all living creatures is represented by a promise that the fear of man should prevail over those creatures, with the additional clause, 'Into your hands they have been given.' This clause makes the new form fully equivalent to that contained in i. 28. Then, not as an additional grant, joined as it would probably have been in such a case by a copulative, but as if an explanatory addition, without a conjunction, God adds, 'Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; as the green herb I have given you all.' Now, except we are to understand this latter clause as a reference to i. 29, it would give no colour to the supposition of a previous restriction. But if we turn to chapter i., we find that this green herb was not mentioned in verse 29 at all, but in contrast with it was the food granted in verse 30 to the inferior animals; and so, if there is any reference at all, it must be to this latter

grant, which is impossible. The reference being thus disproved, the supposition of a previous restriction falls with it. The whole is only a renewal of the original grant. But there is a special reason for mentioning the use of animal food here, namely, that the restriction from its use with 'the life, which is the blood,' might be subjoined. The grant of animal food is here expressly mentioned, instead of being merely implied as before, not with any reference to the absence of a previous right to use it, but with a view to a restriction to be newly introduced, rendered necessary, perhaps, by the prevalence of savage habits in the use of animal food degrading to human nature, and tending to sanguinary violence towards men. The prevalent notion, therefore, of the unlawfulness of animal food before the deluge, or of the first grant of it after that event, has no real foundation in the first and ninth chapters. The seeming countenance which exists for such a supposition vanishes on a careful consideration of the sacred text."

Almost all are accustomed to think otherwise. We leave these remarks, to show that there is at least some reason for reconsidering the ordinary view.

13. "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, (it was) very good." These words relate to the entire finished work of God, including the Edenic home of Adam and Eve,—to all, in fact, set forth in detail in the second chapter. All is thus pronounced creatively perfect. The great Builder had perfectly executed the perfect plan of the great Architect. It may be well, however, to note that this is not to be taken, as it often seems to be, as implying that the entire physical condition of our world was then raised to a pitch of perfection nowhere to be found since the fall of man. The idea that the whole earth was originally perfectly prepared for a perfect race of men, and that, because of the sin of Adam, this original constitution was destroyed, appears to have no real basis in Scripture, as it receives no support what-

ever from geology. The earth was doubtless fully fitted for all its primitive purposes. It contained a suitable abode for sinless man. But, that all other regions, near and remote, were as suitably prepared for a sinless race never destined to inhabit them, can be maintained by neither Scripture nor science on the one hand, nor by any proper consideration of Divine wisdom on the other. That the earth is declared to have been cursed, is a simple matter of fact. The meaning, however, of that fact, we must, with all due care, interpret for ourselves. If man had never sinned, we may safely infer that the whole world would have either been differently constituted from the beginning, or been afterwards, as the expanding race required, as highly fitted for habitation as was the garden of Eden for its innocent inhabitants. By not so fitting it, and by leaving it to the imperfect care and labour of fallen man, without any positive act of God, the curse pronounced could not fail practically to take effect. We need not, for instance, suppose that "the thorns and thistles" spoken of were created after the fall, and as a direct penal result of the first transgression. As already said, we cannot trace to that sin the entrance of death into the world of irrational creatures, as many were wont to do through the misinterpretation of a few passages of Scripture, and through sheer forgetfulness of the manifold essential distinctions between rational and irrational, responsible and irresponsible beings.

14. This admission certainly suggests the wide question of the consistency of the original constitution of things, thus inclusive of the reign of death, with the infinite benevolence of its Divine Author. Amongst others, both elder and younger Mill have expressed themselves very strongly on this and kindred subjects. They have viewed the existence of so much evil as not only inconsistent with the rule of a special Providence, but as fitted to cast more than doubt on the very being of God.

In his posthumous writings, the younger Mill has keenly argued that such evil is at least utterly inconsistent with the existence of a God at once infinitely powerful and infinitely good. Such a Being would, he was assured, have created a world of unmingled happiness. Even some of those, who expressly affirm their belief in a Divine Author of the universe, find in the existence of countless and endlessly diversified weapons of destruction at least a strong prop to the theory of development. These they prefer to trace to the remote indirect agency of God. All due reverence they think demands this. Nor are they without considerable support from human sentiment. Still, in whatever way produced, all must be really, however remotely, traced to the will of God ; so that, if the direct creation of hostile instincts and deadly instruments must be pronounced inconsistent with Divine wisdom and goodness, it was assuredly no less truly inconsistent with these perfections, to provide with infallible certainty, even though at an almost infinitely remote period, for the production of what must secure the reign of death as widely as it secures the reign of life.

15. In considering the argument based on the fact of death or of suffering of any kind, we should clearly distinguish between the case of man and that of the lower creatures. In the case of the former, it is at once admitted that death and all kinds of suffering are traced to sin from beginning to end of Scripture. Whatever the antiquity of man, geology can never prove that sinless men ever died. If it could prove that men had lived and died without coming to such a state of moral development as to be justly entitled to the name of responsible beings, or as to be really capable of what can be fairly accounted sin, that is, of the voluntary transgression of known moral law, then it would prove no actual exception to the great Scripture principle, that, in the case of moral beings, death can enter only through the door of sin, but rather that there once existed

a race of beings like man in form, but unlike him in reality, and in so far as the question of sin and death is concerned to be ranked, not with mankind, but with the inferior and irresponsible classes whose case we are now mainly considering.

16. We cannot treat of so large a question as that of the law of the moral world, which universally connects suffering with sin. To deny the consistency of such a law, or of all the evils which through its operation of necessity flow to the sinner, with the infinite Benevolence of God, would be simply to deny to such Benevolence the prerogative of creating the very highest order of beings. Too often the moral nature of such beings, inclusive of a will free to choose the evil as well as to choose the good, seems entirely forgotten. However, we cannot say more on this point. At least, we can only add, that the admission of sin, properly so-called, leads us, if we would do justly, to trace all the consequent suffering, not to the Benevolent Creator, but to the guilty creature on the one hand ; and that we must reason in opposition to the dictates of our entire moral constitution, if we would infer a want of propriety in connecting suffering with sin on the other.

17. In the case of the lower animals, the question relates solely to the production of happiness, or the contrary. Here no moral law can obtain, as no moral nature is supposed. Viewed as a child of God, man may fairly expect God to act as a Father, and thus, where life is forfeited by no act of sin, to preserve him in life and happiness for ever. However, the mere production of animal life cannot involve the obligation to prolong that life, far less to preserve it, like that of a loving obedient child, for ever. So far as Creative Benevolence is concerned, the sole question pertains to the production of happiness. If God had painlessly introduced, and as painlessly removed, an endless succession of joyous sentient beings, all must have been traced to the purest benevolence ; no complaint could have been fairly made because of the fact that all were short-

lived. The only doubt, which could have with possible fairness arisen, would have been as to whether the Divine benevolence had acted up to the full extent of possible production.

Now, we may suppose such a doubt not altogether without reason, or that God actually could have created a vastly greater amount of animal enjoyment, only, however, at the expense of a very considerable amount of concomitant suffering, large in itself, but small compared with the additional sum of happiness produced,—that, in fact, by creating this world as He has actually done, He would do all this, or create the greatest possible amount of enjoyment at the expense of the least possible amount of suffering. Then would not the verdict of every reasonable mind be, that the very best thing to be done was just that which we find to have been actually done, and that, therefore, in this case God acted when so creating in keeping with the exercise of infinite goodness, wisdom, and power?

It is asked, How can we know that God did what was the very best to be done, and what, therefore, it was most benevolent for Him to do? The answer is simple: as no one could or can know better than the blessed Creator what was best to be done, every one ought to have the reverence on the one hand, and the modesty on the other, to infer that what God knew to be the best, His boundless benevolence, guided by His infinite wisdom, chose for His almighty power to effect.

18. The human mind, at least, can conceive no wiser or more benevolent system than that which actually exists. Besides the supposition already made, we may imagine one or two other methods of Divine operation. We may suppose, for instance, the exclusive creation of man. Then doubtless there could have been no animal suffering. But, apart from the good which man must have lost, who can, in this case, calculate the amount of happiness which would have never been enjoyed? Again, we may suppose the creation of herbivorous races alone. What then? They would soon have multiplied

beyond the means of support, and thus have perished in a more painful manner than they do according to the existing system; whilst the results would have been most disastrous, the atmosphere being charged with the most deadly elements, and every region of the earth being rendered untenable by man or any other creature. The only remaining supposition is, that of the creation of beings which, though destitute of reason, were destined to live for ever,—a supposition which is simply so absurd and monstrous, that we need not pause to do more than thus simply notice it, if for no other purpose than that of exhausting the number of possible hypotheses, and of indicating that no plan of man can for one moment be compared with the plan which God has not only devised, but also executed in the establishment of the system of things which we see before and around us.

One simple and practical way in which all sentimental arguments against the Divine benevolence may be answered is this: Men, unless perverted by the most degrading superstition, universally deem it consistent with the purest human benevolence to destroy, as painlessly as possible, animal life, in order to the support of human life; and, therefore, what they believe they can themselves thus benevolently do, they cannot consider it wrong or inconsistent with benevolence for God to lead them to do, or to make it necessary for them to do. What may thus be appointed for man to do, it may be assuredly benevolent to appoint for the inferior creatures to do.

As a matter of fact, the whole order of things commends itself and the combined wisdom and goodness of its Divine Author to all who, instead of being misled by abstract and sentimental argument as to the character and works of God, possess the reverence and the modesty to believe and own that the ever-blessed God knew better than they the best possible manner in which His Benevolence and Wisdom could wield His Almighty Power.

XI.

“And the Heavens and the Earth were finished, and all their Host. And on the seventh day God finished His work which He made ; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He made. And God blessed the Seventh day, and sanctified it : because on it He rested from all His work which God created and made.”

1. These verses should have been connected with those of the first chapter, and thus have formed the close of the first section, or of the more general account of creation. They tend to confirm the view given of the first verse of the first chapter, according to which the words “heavens and earth” relate to the universal cosmos, and not to the mere elementary substances used in the work of construction. The whole is said to have been finished or ended on the seventh day, not by the addition of some final portion of the work, but by the treatment of the whole as complete or by resting from further work. Yet, this Divine rest is not to be regarded as a total cessation from every kind of work, but solely from that spoken of in the first chapter.

2. Hence we may add, the course of Divine providence may, in one sense, be said to have at this point begun. In a secondary sense, indeed, in the progressive alteration of the globe, and in the successive development of the numerous races of plants and animals, the work of creation may be viewed as still going on. The mere use of the word “rest” is very far from excluding the idea of such continued operation. As said elsewhere, the rest into which the saints enter, whether in this world or in the next, perfectly consists with all the saintly activities of earth and of heaven. In thus speaking of God as resting, and, as in Exodus xxxi. 17, “being refreshed,” the writer speaks anthropopathically. Such expressions are not without real and profound meaning. They imply that cessation from creative work to which we have referred ; they imply the blessed contemplation of this glorious universe ; and

thus imply such Divine delight in that finished work as corresponds to the refreshing sense of human toil crowned with the happiest results.

3. This seventh day of Divine rest still continues. It was but begun when the sabbath was instituted, whether in the beginning of the world or at the time of Moses. For the treatment of the verbal transition from the one to the other, and for the consideration of the important place which the sabbath institution, as here already alluded to, holds throughout Scripture, we would refer to the more general interpretation of this first section.

We may here add a few remarks with respect to the practical importance of that institution. Nor can we do better than quote the following from Kalisch: "The design of God is executed ; the world is framed, organised, and peopled ; He has placed upon the earth a being which mirrors in some degree, His own Divine nature, which was henceforward to work and create on the earth. Man is the culminating point to which the energy of God had tended ; and as he resembles God in his nature, he should imitate Him in his activity ; the work of God should be the example and the type of the work of man. The Scriptures teach man the attributes of God, only to show him his own ideal aims ; and thus they relate that God rested after the six days of creation, to impress upon man that the end of all work is rest, that contemplation is the fruit of exertion ; that spiritual life is both the aim and the reward of material life. The sabbath of God is the type of the sabbath of man ; it is here introduced to enforce its paramount holiness, its Divine character, and seems designedly stated with a certain copiousness and abundance of diction. God did not require rest : He 'is never fatigued nor weary' (Isa. xl. 28) ; He creates by His mere will, by His thought ; He commands, and it exists ; He is always spiritual, pure, sublime ; He is free from all lower propensities. But in man, the spiritual and physical

elements are in perpetual warfare ; the victory is often uncertain ; it is not always on the better side ; he has to make great exertions for small results ; the power is limited ; the obstacles are many, while the aim is distant and the time brief. Does he not require seasons for reflection, when the soul takes breath in the wild race of daily toil ? when the mind surveys the way, comparing that which has been traversed with what remains to be performed ? when the conflict is silent, and the equipoise is restored ? when man approaches again to that state of internal harmony which is the centre of his resemblance to God ? The sabbath, then, is a *necessary* institution ; it is indispensable for a *religious* life ; and that Book which is intended as the fountain of religion, places the origin of the sabbath at the beginning of its pages ; it makes the sabbath the corner-stone of the *moral* world ; and, therefore, leads its first cause back to the creation of the *physical* world."

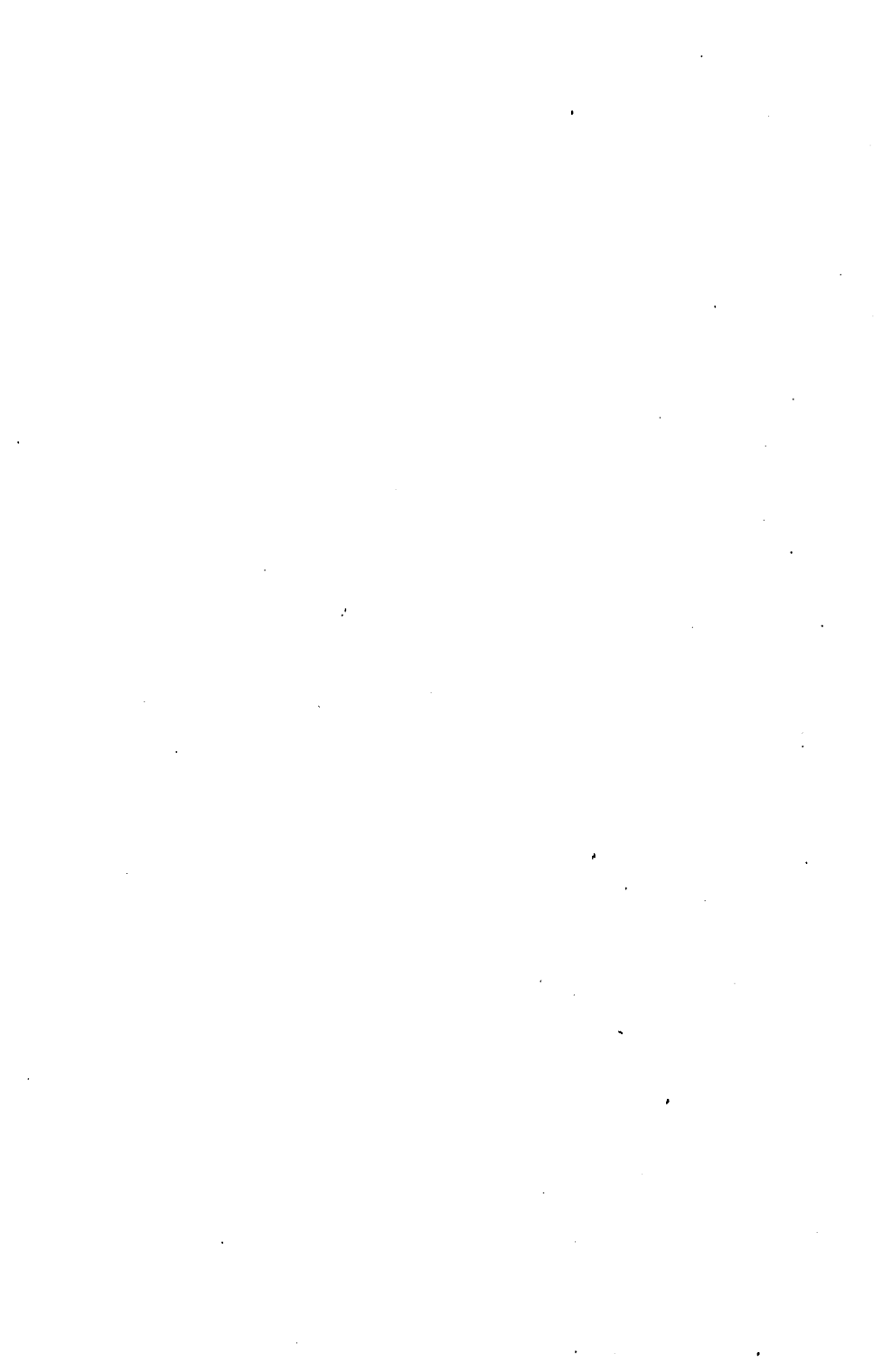
4. This is true to the present day, and will continue so to the end of the world. In the very highest sense, "the sabbath was made for man." It was no mere Jewish institution. Its foundation is broad as the work of creation. Its value is proved by the experience of nations as well as of individuals. One of its manifold purposes, that of commemorating the creation of the universe and of worshipping the universal Creator, is grand beyond measure. Sin, indeed, has marred the glorious work ; still, the great redemption involves even more than the simple "restitution of all things." We cannot discuss, and would heartily accept, the usual belief as to the change of the day from the last to the first of every week. Both Creation and Redemption can thus be remembered together. The keeping of such a day may well be regarded as the enjoyment of sweetest liberty, and not as the endurance of the slightest bondage. We cannot but wonder to find so many of even highly cultivated minds ever associating with the observance of it the low ideas of superstition and asceticism. Every day, indeed, ought

to be holy, and ought to bring before the mind of the Christian the loftiest and the most grateful thoughts of both Creation and Redemption. Still a time of physical rest and of spiritual activity, like that of the Christian sabbath, will never cease to be useful or cease to be prized by the truly earnest in spirit, till, through the perfected harmony of the creature with the Creator, the sabbath of man, like that of God, has become eternal.



Chapter III.

UNITY AND HARMONY OF THE FIRST AND SECOND SECTIONS OF THE NARRATIVE.



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1. BEFORE proceeding with our exposition, we may deal separately with the important question of the unity and harmony of the entire narrative. We need not say, that the two sections have long been regarded by many of the learned as traceable to more than one source, and as at once dissimilar in style and discordant in detail. The common author, or rather, in this case, the mere compiler, is supposed to have used two or more documents, combined certain fragments of history, or united various traditions pertaining to one and the same subject, the creation of the world, and, as might be expected, by no means fully consistent. Especially, we may add, has the undoubtedly remarkable manner in which the Divine names are used suggested, as an almost infallibly certain inference, the idea of at least a twofold origin. We shall not further refer to the different theories thus merely hinted at, but go on to treat of the evidence of unity, and of the apparent proofs of discordance.

2. We would not be understood to deny all use, nay, the very freest use, of Tradition. We would rather assume, that much of what we find here briefly recorded may have been familiar to many, long before the era of Moses, not unlikely handed down through the ages from the very beginning. Along with the Abrahamic family, a pretty full and exact knowledge of the creation and fall of man, as well as of the first promise of redemption, would doubtless travel westwards from their Chaldæan home, where seem to have lingered the more correct remembrances of earliest times, as may be so fa-

gathered from Scripture, and as the wonderful results of recent research seem to illustrate. Without detriment to Scripture authority, the freest use of tradition, oral or written, may be admitted, provided only historical consistency be granted, and the author acknowledged to have been Divinely enabled to separate the true from the false, to supplement what was lost or wanting, and to put the whole in a form befitting its place in the sacred volume. So far as real usefulness or Divine authority are concerned, it is in fact of no consequence whether the two sections are to be traced *to* one or more sources, or whether two separate documents were employed by one inspired redactor, or whether all is to be ascribed to one Divinely directed human mind. All inquiries thus suggested we simply let alone. What we say relates exclusively to these chapters, and not to Genesis, far less to the Pentateuch, viewed generally. The question of human authorship is one thing, and that of Divine authority another. Christians may be, nay, may have been very long altogether in the wrong as to the former, whilst perfectly in the right to the latter. Let us not bind on this or on any other portion of Scripture any needless burden. Here it is enough if we remove objections due to alleged error or inconsistency.

3. We may now go on to treat, *first*, of what we deem sufficient proof of unity; and, *secondly*, of instances of apparent discordance.

4. The first proof of unity, to which we would advert, rests on the fact that, whilst the two sections are in some respects independent and complete, they are, at the same time, in other respects closely connected and complementary of one another, or organically one and the same inseparable whole. The first prepares the way for the second: the second gives meaning and completeness to the first. The one, as elsewhere brought out, relates generally to the visible universe; the other relates specially to primitive man. Still, they

are not simply consecutive,—the one beginning where the other ends. The first human pair are the principal figures in both. Yet they are by no means contemplated under the same aspect, or as standing in the same relation to surrounding objects, or to their earthly dwelling-place. In the first, they are viewed as denizens of the world at large, the parents of a sovereign race, created in the likeness of God, and designed to cultivate and people the whole earth. In the second, they are spoken of individually; the details of their creation and instruction are given, and their first abode is named and described. Here, and in the accompanying account of the temptation, we have a kind of parenthetical history, which forms the only and the precious key, at once to the full meaning of the first section with which it is said to disagree, and to the entire subsequent Scriptures which are just a grand development of it.

It may be well to note this fact. We have already found that the structure of the first section is very peculiar, and that because of the vast and complex work to be described on the one hand, and because a suitable basis for the sabbath institution had to be provided on the other. Written after the forfeiture of paradise, and intended for the practical use of mankind in every age, not only is it constructed as just said, but it speaks of the parents of the race in a manner suitable to their case alike before and after the fall. Here we refer chiefly to what is said of their being formed in the Divine likeness, and of their ruling position in the world. As the first sin did not entirely and in every sense obliterate that image, and as that position was, in keeping with the first promise, to no small extent retained, the words originally used of the parents continue applicable to the entire race in every age and country. Accordingly, they continue to form the first page of the history of that race and of the world at large. The second page may be said to begin with the opening of the fifth chapter, where the words of the first section, to which we

specially refer, are directly quoted as the fit beginning of the history of mankind outside of Eden, or, as we have said, inhabiting the world at large: "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him." Then follows the reference to Seth as bearing the likeness of his father Adam, and therefore the likeness of God. Another page of the human history begins with the opening of the ninth chapter, in which Noah is spoken of as the second father of the race, and in which the same portion of the first section is quoted as still suitable to mankind, whilst the fact there recorded of the creation of man in the Divine image is used to set forth the peculiar sacredness of human life. Thus, whilst man is said, both before and after the story of Eden, to bear the image of God, and to have dominion over the earth, we are taught by that story to view that dominion as incomplete, and to regard that image as, in the first instance, created and unsullied, and as, in the second, transmitted and imperfect. Thus wonderfully, then, do all the parts of the narrative dovetail. Each seems rounded off as if entire and independent; and yet both are mutually related and complementary. The whole organically befits its place in Scripture. We repeat, therefore, that no mere independent documents or separate fragments of history or traditionary accounts could possibly be so combined.

5. We might have carried out the preceding argument into greater detail. We might have particularized some one instance of apparent dissimilarity and yet of such real agreement as we have been treating of. We might, for example, have selected the seemingly unlike statements with regard to the "man" of the one account and the "Adam" of the other. Or, we might have constructed a new argument by showing how these, however dissimilar, not only agree, but, as we have said, are exactly complementary, or are all needful to make up one complete account. In the one case, as already

alluded to, we are informed of Divine likeness and royal dignity on the part of man. In the other, we are told of the material frame, and of the lowly employment of Adam. On the one side, we seem to have power and glory; and on the other, weakness and work. Still all is consistent, all is complete. Man has an animal body as well as a Divine spirit. Is he said to possess a high moral nature in the first instance? That very nature is implied in the moral probation of which we are informed in the second. Do we read of dominion in the case of man? In that of Adam we read of how the inferior creatures were gathered to him, that he might symbolically exercise the prerogative of royalty, by giving to them their respective names, just as do parents universally with their children, and kings occasionally with captives and subjects. In mankind, too, how amazing the union of weakness and power! As to true work and true glory, are they not one and the same? In the two sections, then, we have indeed two distinct pictures, but they are of one and the same primitive man.

6. Further, this unity is virtually, nay, all but expressly, affirmed by the sacred author himself. In the introductory statement of the second section, he directly connects the two sections: "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth," etc. This connection will appear more palpable and decided, when we come to treat of the difficulty due to the peculiar reference to the vegetable kingdom. At present we would allude to the sacred Author's implied testimony as to the same primitive man being intended in both parts of the narrative. As he connects the second with the first chapter, he also connects by a like formula, the fifth and first chapters, "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man," etc. Thus are all the parts of the history interwoven. Thus, too, the Adam of the fifth chapter is identified with the man of the first. But there cannot be

the shadow of a doubt as to the identity of the Adam of the fifth and of the second chapters. The man, therefore, of the first section and the Adam of the second are thus virtually declared by the author to be the same.

7. Whilst a counter argument has been formed on the ground of a seemingly marked difference of style, we think there may be found underneath the surface such a real likeness as at least tends, if it does not suffice, to prove sameness of origin or the unity of the two sections in question. We have already traced the difference of style to the difference of subject. We have often alluded to the peculiar structure of the first. What we now remark is, that the second, necessarily very unlike it in form and external features, agrees with it in a way that cannot well be deemed accidental. We shall refer to only two points. The first is that of creative time. If the account of the creative week had been merely traditionary, most likely would it have been viewed, at so early a date, as using the term "day" in a literal sense. The writer of the story of Eden or compiler of the whole history, therefore, if really uninspired, would have carefully avoided the introduction of any details, which would have been palpably inconsistent with the supposition of so limited a time. In fact, some have argued that the two accounts are thus inconsistent, and therefore of different origin. We have seen, however, what appears sufficient to prove that the writer of the first section did not mean to convey the idea of literal days. When we find the writer of the second constructing his account on a principle inconsistent with that idea, and, further, when we find both sections more easily interpreted and harmonized when indefinite periods are supposed, we have even no small proof that the writers were not different, but the same.

The second point to which we have alluded is that of the principle of order on which both parts of the narrative have been constructed. At first sight, they seem to have been

written on totally different principles. In the one case, man is spoken of at the close; whilst in the other, he is introduced at the beginning. It would not be hard to account for this. We have, too, already seen to how great an extent the principle of classification is used in the record of universal creation, as it could not possibly have been in that of Adam and his Eden home. Still, the more carefully we study the entire history, and the more clearly we perceive the connection of the successive parts, the more fully shall we be convinced that both sections have been written on the one principle of arranging all, not according to the order of time or of actual production, but according to that of the author's own thought or design. Thus, as we have already suggested, the idea of a house and its inhabitant underlies the whole of the first account, and so far affected its general form. The chief figure thus naturally appears last. So, with the very same design of putting Adam at the centre of the limited sphere in which he first moved, and of showing that all surrounding objects were made in subserviency to him, he is introduced at the beginning, and all things are spoken of in direct relationship to him. The garden is planted for his sake, and prepared exactly to meet his case, as a moral no less than as a physical being. So, the lower animals are introduced in like direct relationship to him,—to indicate his superiority on the one hand, and to illustrate his character as a social being on the other. We need not say more on this point. We have said enough to express our meaning, and to suggest what we deem an additional proof of unity. Both sections appear to be written according to the same principles of order, that, not of time and production, but of purpose and thought. We leave the further development of this argument till we treat of alleged inconsistencies, of which the order in which the creation of the inferior animals is set forth in the two sections is one.

8. In doing so, we deem it sufficient to consider the follow-

ing:—*first*, The apparent inconsistency between the two sections with respect to the order of the production of the vegetable kingdom; *secondly*, the marked dissimilarity between the two accounts of the creation of man; *thirdly*, the apparent discordance as to the order of the production of the inferior animals; and, *fourthly*, the striking distinction between the two sections, due to the use of the simple name God (Elohim) in the case of the one, and of the compound name Lord God (Jehovah Elohim) in the case of the other.

9. The *first* objection is based on the apparent inconsistency with respect to the order of the production of the vegetable kingdom. This is so far concealed by the mode of rendering adopted by our translators, who, accordingly, have been accused of adopting it with a view to the removal of the difficulty. In our version we have, “These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew,” etc. According to this, the entire creative week is supposed to be referred to, whilst we are simply informed that God made the plants and herbs before putting them in the ground or making them spring forth. The time or order of their production would thus not appear to be alluded to; but the statement would certainly seem at least needless or of too little consequence to form a part of the sacred record. Why tell us that the primitive soil was so dry that no vegetable, however already formed, could be planted till a mist was caused to ascend for the purpose of watering it? Why not prepare the soil first, and produce the plants next? Whatever, then, may be said of this translation, we seem to have reason to doubt its correctness. We shall find that which gives rise to the apparent inconsistency by no means thus objectionable.

We may give it thus: “These are the generations of the

Heavens and of the Earth when they were (being) created, in the day of Jehovah God's making earth and heaven. And no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field yet grew: for Jehovah God had not caused it to rain upon the earth. And a man (there was) not to cultivate the ground. And there rose a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground." In every point this translation seems to be correct. Whatever may be said of consistency with the first chapter, it yields at least a meaning of some point, which the other does not appear to do. It does seem to declare that man was created first and the plants and herbs next. Here, according to some, we have an invincible difficulty or a most palpable discordance. To remove it, more than one expedient has been adopted. It has been proposed, contrary to all subsequent usage, to connect the words, "These are the generations of the heavens," etc., retrospectively with the first section, rather than, as a kind of heading, prospectively with the second. We are persuaded that this is neither possible on the one hand, nor necessary on the other.

In meeting the difficulty, we think an error, tending to involve the whole in obscurity, is often committed; we mean that of supposing the entire creative week to be referred to, and the parallel clauses, according to Hebrew idiom, to allude to one and the same finished work. The writer's real meaning, we think, will be more correctly caught, if, in translating, we keep more closely by his peculiar modes of expression: "These are the generations of the Heavens and of the Earth in their being created"—or, when they were being created, or when they were in course of creation,—“in the day of Jehovah God's making earth and heaven”—or, in the day when Jehovah God was making earth and heaven. In this way, we may regard the first clause as referring to the whole creative work of the first section, not however as finished, but as a work in course of advancement; so that we are left to judge as to what period or point in its progress the writer means to direct atten-

tion. That point or period, we think, is expressly indicated by the second clause, which we cannot regard as a mere instance of Hebrew parallelism,—“in the day or at the time of the making of the earth and heaven,” or, as we take it, the dry land and firmament. In speaking of the universe, the order, “heavens and earth,” was fitly retained, but when of the habitable globe and atmosphere, the order was as fitly adopted, “earth and heaven,” or earth and air. Now we have already treated of the words, “In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth,” and concluded that they refer to the entire work of creation.

We were led to regard this view as so far proved by the form of expression here employed, “These are the generations of the Heavens and the Earth when they were in course of creation.” Our first clause, then, relates to the whole creative period, and thus, of course, includes that spoken of in the second, namely, the time of the formation of the firmament and of the elevation of the dry land, to the beginning of which we may most fairly suppose the reference made, as we are led to think of the work as going on and not as yet complete. That the writer means to fix attention on this period we may infer from the fact, that he thus doubly refers to the opening verses of the first chapter, and from what we know of his manner of pointing to some special period or date. Thus, in Numbers iii. 1, we have, “These are the generations of Aaron and Moses, in the day that Jehovah spake with Moses in Mount Sinai;” where the writer directs attention to the special period in the life of Moses, when certain communications were made to him, to which he was about to refer. So, here and in the same way, he directs attention to that period in the history of the development of the universe, when the work of making the firmament and dry land was at least begun.

10. We need hardly say that, by the very peculiar expression, “These are the generations of the heavens and of the

earth," we are to understand, not the creation, formation or development of the universe, but rather a history or account of certain persons or things in some way derivatively or otherwise connected with the universe. This will be clearly seen, if we consider the undoubted meaning of a like formula, which is somewhat more complete : "This is the book of the generations of Adam," in which the idea of a history or record is more clearly expressed, and which is simply a genealogy of certain descendants of Adam in the line of Seth ; that is to say, an account, not of the creation of Adam, but of certain persons, as we have above said, derivatively connected with him. Thus, then, the words before us simply indicate that what follows is an account of man and his dwelling-place, not viewed independently or by themselves, but regarded in relation to the universe, or as, in fact, in some sense sprung from the earth. Especially is his material frame to be spoken of, and that in a way which shall be in keeping with the nature of his subsequent lot, "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." His garden-home, too, was to be described, and therefore a special reference to the vegetable kingdom was to be made.

How was this twofold design to be accomplished? The sacred writer, as we have found, goes back to the era when the vegetable kingdom was, if not absolutely non-existent, at least but very partially developed ; then he expressly announces that, at that period, there were "no plants of the field and no herbs of the field" on the one hand, and that there was "no man to cultivate the soil" on the other. But why so write here? This question, we think, can be satisfactorily answered in only one way ; we mean, by saying that he does so in exact accordance with his own peculiar style. This introductory part of the second section is constructed almost exactly as that of the first. Thus, after the general announcement, he there adds, "and the earth was waste and desolate ; and darkness was upon the face of the deep ;" and then

goes on to tell how the latter was removed by the creation of light, and how the former was removed by the various works which followed. So here, he alludes to the non-existence of man and to that of at least a portion of the vegetable kingdom, to prepare the way for his account of the creation of Adam and of the plantation of the garden of Eden. But, why, it may be asked, pass over the whole of that part of the narrative which follows the portion to which he expressly refers? This question, like the former, we are persuaded, can be satisfactorily answered only by express reference to the author's style. We find an exactly parallel instance in the opening of the fifth chapter, to which we have already had occasion to allude. There the writer carries us back to the creation of Adam, as recorded in the end of the first chapter; and then, passing over the whole intermediate history of Adam and Eve and their primitive abode, and of their sons Cain and Abel with its terrible fratricide and consequent events, he records the birth of Seth, and that in a way which, if ignorant of the narrative passed over, we should have thought clearly proved Seth to have been the first-born son. How unlikely that any reference should have been made to the likeness of the son to the father, unless under the impulse of feeling awakened by the thought of the first birth into the world. The words which follow as to the other children tend to suggest the same conclusion,—“in the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him; male and female created He them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created;” and then immediately follows, “and Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness after his image; and called his name Seth; and the days of Adam, after he had begotten Seth, were eight hundred years; and he begat sons and daughters.” Here, then, the sacred author begins with the close of the first chapter, passes over the next three chapters, and speaks of Seth as if he had recorded the birth of no elder son. So, in the

case on hand, he begins with the opening of the same first chapter, passes over the remaining and larger portion of it, and speaks of the creation of Adam and Eve as if he had not alluded to either before, and of the plantation of the garden as if he had made no previous reference to the vegetable kingdom.

Thus it seems his wont carefully to connect subsequent with preceding portions of his history, and yet to omit everything before recorded which may not stand in direct relation to his new subject, or whose introduction would not subserve his immediate design. He does not allude to what he had said of the entire vegetable world, because he means simply to speak of the garden of Eden. He does not allude to what he had said of man, because he proposes to present him under a totally different aspect. He does not allude to the inferior creatures, because he intends to introduce at least a portion of them in the closest relation to Adam. Nor does he allude to the fish of the sea, because the sea was in no way directly connected with the first habitation of man.

11. The passage before us, then, is constructed exactly in keeping with the author's peculiar style. As in the opening of the fifth chapter, he passes over very much of what he had previously written; and, as in the beginning of the first chapter, he refers to the darkness, etc., in order to prepare for what follows as to the light and the like, he alludes to the non-existence of man and of certain vegetable productions in order to prepare for what he is about to add with respect to Adam and the garden of Eden. We have not then the shadow of a reason for concluding, that the narrative of the second section is inconsistent with that of the first, as we are certain that we have no reason for thinking the statement of the fifth chapter inconsistent with the entirely omitted history of the second, third, and fourth chapters.

12. We are simply informed that at the early period referred to, "no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of

the field yet grew." Whether we understand these words of the whole or only of a part of the vegetable kingdom, they are literally true. So far therefore as the question of consistency is concerned, it is of no moment whether they are taken in the one sense or in the other. The reason assigned would seem more naturally to refer to the entire kingdom, "For Jehovah God had not caused it to rain upon the earth"; and it must be held to do so, and not to any special portion of that kingdom, if we are to take the statement absolutely of the total want of rain. However, we do not think that we are at liberty to put so absolute a sense upon it. The author cannot be supposed to refer to any mere temporary want or to any like temporary supply, as he must be regarded as alluding, not to the mere planting, but to the continued support as well as full growth of what was planted. We therefore infer that, by these simple terms, he meant more than at first glance "meets the eye." Just as the words, "Let there be light: and there was light," have, we think, been proved to refer to no early and transient illumination of the earth, but to the full and final cosmical arrangements by which the proper illumination of it to the present day was secured, and therefore by which an excess of light was as really prevented as an abundance was supplied; so here reference is made to no transient or imperfect arrangement, to neither deficient nor excessive amount, but to the full and final establishment of the conditions of a permanent, universal, and normal supply.

In this way we may fairly suppose that the vegetable kingdom may have existed long before the time here alluded to, that of full preparation for the healthy growth of the more highly organized and more precious portion of that kingdom, the higher grains, the fruit-bearing trees, and the like, whose perfect development at least would require a purer atmosphere, a more regular supply of moisture, a more exact provision of the conditions of vegetable life and growth than would the more numerous species of earlier and inferior type. The

words used suggest the same idea, "plant of the field, herb of the field,"—the repetition being emphatic,—and the field being the cultivated field. Thus we may fairly apply the entire statement to those portions of the vegetable kingdom which are of special use to man, and which require the aid of human culture. This is in keeping with what we deem the reason for this allusion to that kingdom, namely, to prepare the way for what follows as to the garden of Eden. The existence of all vegetable life is not denied, but simply that of certain kinds of plants and herbs. In this way we are carried back to an indefinite period after the first appearance of vegetable life, and also to an indefinite period before the creation of man, all inconsistency between the sections thus disappearing.

13. Another reason for the supposed late introduction of the vegetable kingdom is usually supposed to be added, "Nor was there a man to till the ground." If we do take this to be a second reason, then there can be no possible doubt as to the higher grains and the like being exclusively intended, as no intelligent writer could assign the want of human labour as a reason for not creating the many species which grew so luxuriantly without the aid of man. However, we rather think the words are used independently, and simply to prepare the way for the announcement about to be made of the formation of Adam, as the reference to the plants and herbs prepares for the allusion to the garden of Eden. The mode of expression as well as the structure of the passage would seem to suggest this, "and a man (there was) not to till the ground,"—or, virtually, "and, as for a man, there was none to cultivate the ground." This is so far borne out by the fact, that the very employment of the man about to be introduced is expressly alluded to, that of keeping and tilling or cultivating, the very word here used of the ground.

14. Another statement yet remains for remark: "But a mist went up and watered the whole face of the ground." So the

authorised version, implying that the early want of rain was supplied by the mist or vapour. This idea would well agree with our interpretation of the words referring to the absence of rain. The combined meaning would then be,—The physical arrangements for the needful and normal supply of rain were not yet completed, and so the higher vegetable species were not yet produced, but the ground was notwithstanding everywhere watered by a mist or vapour which went up from the earth, and thus there was at least provision made for the growth of the less precious portions of the vegetable kingdom. We do not suppose that much objection would be made to such a view of the matter. However, we do not think that this is precisely what the sacred writer intended. We rather think that the more correct rendering is, “and,” not “but,” “a mist or vapour went up from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground,” implying that thus the want referred to had been met and removed. If we, as we justly may, take “the earth” to mean the whole terraqueous globe, we have here what may undoubtedly be regarded as a very brief and simple yet correct indication of the real nature and source of what we have already said was intended by the statement as to rain, namely, its permanent, universal, and normal supply. Such, we think, was the author’s design in thus recording how, not a part, but “the whole face” of the ground was watered. In this way, he is to be understood as informing us, *first*, of a want of rain as to whose supply no mention was made in the part of the first chapter to which he had just directed attention, and, *secondly*, of the manner, as well as of the fact, of the removal of that want; the statement thus made, instead of being discordant, being really supplementary to that chapter.

15. We have treated this matter at very considerable length, partly because many view the inconsistency as not only real, but very marked and not to be mistaken, and partly because we have deemed it well to bring out certain features of the

author's style, attention to which can alone lead to the satisfactory interpretation of the whole of this introductory history. The result may now be put in the form of a paraphrase somewhat thus : "In the day, or in the earlier part of the time, in which Jehovah God was progressively forming 'the dry land' and the aerial firmament, there were no plants of the field or herbs of the field yet made to grow—none of the superior vegetable species of human use and culture were yet produced,—as the physical conditions of the fit and permanent supply of rain were not then fully established. At that time, too, there was no man existent, whose part it is to cultivate the soil. However, in good time the cosmical arrangements were completed, by which, *i.e.*, by the ascent and circulation of vapour, the needful supplies of rain were permanently secured."

16. On this we may add one or two closing remarks. Our interpretation seems clearly to set aside all appearance of inconsistency. It also indicates the real nature of this passage as so far supplementary to that of the first chapter.

The writer of this second section must have regarded the days of the first, which he had before his mind, whether written by him or not, as not ordinary days, but periods of indefinite length. This we infer from the fact that, if he viewed them as ordinary, he could not possibly have spoken of a delay in the production of plants and herbs on account of the want of rain, nor could he have spoken of the want of a man to till the soil, if he believed that there were only two or three literal days between the elevation of the land and the creation of man. The want of two or three days of agricultural toil could not assuredly have been referred to. Instead, then, of having here a proof of discordance between the narratives, we have a clear proof that, as we have elsewhere given what we deem satisfactory evidence, in both sections of the sacred history, lengthened periods are intended.

We may further say that, as we have also set forth what seems sufficient evidence of the development of the vegetable kingdom extending from the time of the early formation of the dry land to that of the creation of man, so we find here the same idea of gradual development set forth, as the higher vegetable species are undoubtedly represented as of comparatively late production. We could not find stronger proof of the unity of the two narratives than the fact, that the more closely we examine those portions of them which at first appear most palpably inconsistent, the more clearly do they at length appear, not only to harmonize, but also to be supplementary of one another.

We might have noted before now what seems a fair illustration of the correctness of one of our general principles of interpretation, that the Divine works successively recorded in the first chapter were really contemporaneously carried on. Now, here in the opening of the second section, we find the expression, "in the day of Jehovah God's making earth and heaven," in which two of these works are associated with the same day or same time, and that in the inverse order of the first narrative, "earth and heaven," dry land and firmament, instead of firmament and dry land, implying that the order was indifferent, as, in fact, the two were gradually carried on so far at least contemporaneously.

17. The *second* objection to the unity of the entire narrative is based on the marked dissimilarity between the two accounts of the creation of man. As we have already treated of this, we need not add much regarding it. The dissimilarity is at once admitted. Still, it is precisely of that nature which difference of design could not fail to create. In the first chapter man appears at the head of the world at large. In the second he is spoken of in relation to the garden of Eden and the vastly important moral probation associated with it. Now, when we find it objected, that, in the one case, the writer speaks as if man were created directly and without the intervention of

means, or without any successive physical operations, and in the other as if the Divine work were less direct and carried on through so many stages ; also that, in the former the man and woman are referred to as created at one and the same time, and in the latter are expressly said to have been formed at two different times,—the answer is very simple and easy. In the first instance, there is at least no shadow of inconsistency in so far as matter of fact is concerned. In the second, it may be replied, that, as throughout the whole chapter, so in the portion relating to man, we find no reference to special operation or physical process. This we have already traced to the nature and design of the peculiar structure of the first section. The design of the second section was entirely different. The end in view could not possibly be attained without such details as we find given. As we have already pointed out, the two accounts, the one more general and the other more detailed, are at once accordant and supplementary. The general statement of the first as to the creation of man “male and female,” cannot so much as appear inconsistent with the details of the second, unless to such as hold the six days to be of ordinary length. Viewing them as indefinite periods, the sixth day supplies ample time for the full and orderly development of all the facts recorded.

18. The *third* objection is based on the apparent discordance with respect to the order of the creation of the inferior creatures. That based on the fact that the birds are connected with the air in the one account and with the earth in the other, is hardly worthy of notice, as they are alike connected with both. However, we may cite the entire passage which has suggested the stronger objection as to the inferior creatures in general, “And Jehovah God said, (It is) not good that the man should be alone: I will make him a help-meet for him. And Jehovah God formed out of the ground every beast of the field, and every fowl of the heaven ; and brought (them) to the

man to see what he would call them : and whatsoever the man called every living creature, that (was) its name. And the man gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the heavens, and to every beast of the field ; but for the man, he found not a help-meet for himself." Here the writer seems to say that the inferior creatures were formed after Adam, as he seemed to say in the first chapter that Adam was created after them.

19. We have already maintained that the order of creation is by no means certainly, far less universally, indicated by the mere order of the days, but must be inferred from a just consideration of the nature of the works successively recorded. We have no doubt as to the creation of man having followed that of the lower animals. Still, if we had evidence to the contrary, or if the harmony of the two sections necessitated the supposition that at least many of the species were introduced after man, we hold that there is nothing in the account of the sixth day's work absolutely inconsistent with such a supposition. We are persuaded, however, that we require not the aid of an interpretation which must appear violent to many minds. We have simply to keep in view the principle on which both accounts have been written, that of recording the various operations in keeping with the writer's purpose, and not according to the order of the actual work. In the case before us, we have a palpable instance of this. Here, as elsewhere, instead of inconsistency, we find the highest order and harmony distinguishing both parts of the one complete history. We have first the declaration that man was not formed for solitary life, and therefore, that a fit companion was to be provided for him. If the writer had not intended to show the superiority of man or to indicate his consequent social want, why should he first refer to that want, and then allude, not to the formation of the woman, but to the creation and nomination of the lower creatures ?

As already said, the narrative is constructed on the principle

of indicating the subordination of all things, especially the vegetable and animal kingdom, to the interests of man. Accordingly, in speaking of the home provided for him, only such vegetable species are alluded to as were required for this garden of Eden, whilst all others are passed over as not pertaining to the end in view. So here the animal kingdom is alluded to, not independently or in the order of creation, but simply in connection with the purpose just referred to. This is the more evident from the fact that only those parts of it are introduced which stood in more immediate relation to man. We have no allusion to the countless tribes of the rivers and of the seas; and why should these have been omitted, if the purpose of the writer had been to record the mere fact of the creation of the animal kingdom? In fact, the first part of the sentence, "and Jehovah God formed"—we do not need to translate, "had formed"—"out of the ground every beast of the field, and every fowl of the heaven," is clearly introduced, not to give the first account of their creation, but to prepare the way for the second part, "and brought (them) to the man to see what he would call them;" in which we find the main statement required for his purpose, even that of revealing the real social want of Adam. God would show that the creation was incomplete without the being whom He was about to form, and lead the only being yet created in His own likeness to feel the need of the companionship of one of like Divine nature, as well as to perceive the mighty gulf between himself and the inferior creatures around him. The sacred writer at least knew that he had already given the first account of the creation of the inferior animals; or, if that account were the work of another hand, it was certainly before his eyes; so that he could not possibly have committed the enormous blunder which those who affirm inconsistency suppose him to have made.

The key to the whole is simple. It is to be found in the view which we have taken, along with the additional idea, already elsewhere suggested, that here we have an illustration

of what was said in the first section, of the dominion of man over the animal kingdom; that dominion being finely indicated by the bringing of these creatures to Adam on the one hand, and by the power exercised by him on the other in giving them the most significant and appropriate names. This seems the more evidently the case, when we consider the declared result of his intelligent observation. Whilst he so clearly perceived their varied characteristics, he was made doubly conscious of his own superior nature and dignity; so that, as we are told, "for the man he found not an helpmeet for himself." He saw that all might subserve the purposes of God, and prove fit servants to himself, but that none could be helpful to him as the spiritual and social companion of his life.

20. But, apart from general reasoning, we may simply appeal, in conclusion, to an illustrative matter of fact, for which we have not to go out of this very page of the history. It has been argued that the grammatical connection of the first sentence of the passage under consideration with what goes before, as indicated by the conjunction and the tense of the verb used, proves that we must suppose the writer to have intended the order of time. This is to attach an importance to such a connection as usage will by no means warrant. We have the same grammatical connection in the case of the statement with respect to the garden of Eden; and yet, who would undertake, simply on that account, to determine whether the formation of man preceded the planting of the garden, or the contrary? Is not the inference from the order of the two statements far more natural, that the writer intended to show that the garden was made for the man rather than the man for the garden, than that he meant to inform us of the temporal order of the two events? We repeat then, that we have here simply an instance of that subordination of the order of time to the order of purpose which is characteristic of both sections, and which thus tends to prove the unity and harmony of the whole narrative.

21. We come now to treat of the *fourth* and last objection to which we mean to allude, namely, that founded on the striking difference between the two sections, due to the use of the simple name 'God (Elohim)' in the case of the one, and of the compound name Lord God (Jehovah Elohim) in the case of the other.

We need not say that this very peculiar usage forms the real basis of those theories of interpretation implying such manifold origin as would naturally account for the existence of the alleged instances of discordance. That the narrative was virtually borrowed from two distinct documents, or that it was made up of so many fragments of history, was by no means a very unnatural conjecture. It is certainly a striking fact, that the name God (Elohim) should be used throughout the first chapter; the name Lord God (Jehovah Elohim), though not without exception, throughout the second and third chapters; whilst, with but one exception, throughout the fourth chapter, the name Lord (Jehovah) is employed.

We must deal carefully with this singular and significant peculiarity, which cannot be merely incidental, far less accidental. We trace it to design; and if, after all the learned, perplexed, and contradictory criticism which has been expended upon it, that design appear most simple and clear, the proof of unity will be only the more pointed and satisfactory. We submit the following:—

(a.) We need not say how great has been the amount of learned and ingenious discussion, with respect to the etymological origin and import of the words Elohim and Jehovah, traceable to the peculiar usage of these chapters. Certainly we do well to make every effort to extend our knowledge of every thing pertaining to names so precious and sacred. We feel greatly indebted to those who have done their best to shed the light of their extensive and varied learning upon their etymology and use. Still, we cannot help remarking that, so far as the usage distinguishing our narrative is concerned, very

much of the discussion referred to has been misdirected, over-refined, and fanciful. Long before this narrative was written, the word rendered God (Elohim) whatever its etymological import, was doubtless used, as ever afterwards, not only to convey the idea of the true God, but also with reference to gods of every description, however false. Jehovah, again, is to be viewed as the special or personal name of the God spoken of, and which we may well believe was assumed by Himself or suggested to man, for reasons sufficient and wise, whether patent or not, and fitted to serve the purpose of distinguishing the God of revelation from all other gods worshipped by mankind. This will be alluded to again. Here we would simply refer to Deuteronomy vi. 3-5: "Hear, therefore, O Israel, and observe to do (it), that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily as the Lord God (Jehovah Elohim) of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God (Jehovah Elohenu) (is) one Lord (Jehovah). And thou shalt love the Lord thy God (Jehovah Eloheka) with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Thus the one name, Jehovah, is clearly proved to be personal; whilst the other, Elohim, is as clearly shown to be common. Hence Jehovah is often called the God (Elohim) of Israel,—the only true God,—as contrasted with all false gods and with the gods of the heathen.

We are far from meaning that this most sacred name was assumed or suggested apart from its etymological import, or from its fitness to express the profoundest truth concerning Him of whom it was used, and who, we believe, selected it in view of the most important ends. Whilst the fact, that Elohim (God) had the generic sense to which we have referred, proves that we can gain little, at least as concerns this matter, by inquiring into its origin, we find Jehovah represented as in some sense indicating the import of His own name, when giving to Moses his commission to rescue Israel from the iron grasp of

Egypt, Exodus iii. 13-15, connected with Exodus vi. 3 ; both of which passages must, we are persuaded, be rightly understood, if we would find the true key to the use of the Divine names, or if the book of Genesis as a whole would be justly appreciated, especially as regards what is there recorded of Jehovah. We believe, in fact, that the correct interpretation and proper use of these passages can alone open up the real meaning of that book. We cannot here treat at length of this subject, and show, as we think we might, that in the same passages may be found one of the very strongest proofs of the unity of the entire book of Genesis, and also of the fact that he who wrote them was at least familiar with that book, if he was not its author. We shall simply assume the correctness of our conclusion, and make use of it as a key to the matter in hand.

(b.) The conclusion referred to is virtually held by not a few, that Jehovah is the name assumed by God and revealed to man, not only as expressive of His absolute and sole divinity, but also as that under which He was pleased to reveal Himself as the Redeemer God, no less than the Creator of mankind, at first assumed and revealed in relation to redemption rather than to creation. To indicate what we mean, we may quote the passages and add a few remarks. Exodus iii. 13-15: "And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is His name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God (Jehovah Elohim) of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this (is) My Name for ever, and this (is) My Memorial unto all generations." Here we seem to have a new name, "I AM THAT I AM," given as

the name of the God of the fathers of the children of Israel, followed by another name of the same God, "Jehovah, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Now as the two names are really one and the same, the one may be viewed as explanatory of the other: the new, "I AM THAT I AM," of the old, "Jehovah,"—implying that Jehovah means Independent, Self-existent, Absolute Being, and, we may add, Unchangeable and Resistless Will. It thus expresses the profoundest truth of Godhead. Further, as appropriated to be the covenant name of the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, here called an Everlasting Name and Memorial, it is to be regarded as the name of the God of Salvation.

As this has been denied, and that so far on the ground of what is said in the second passage referred to (Exod. vi. 2, 3), we may now consider it: "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I (am) the Lord (Jehovah): and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by (the name of) God Almighty (El Shaddai), but by My name Jehovah was I not known unto them." Here the author of the book of Exodus is supposed by some to deny the truth of the statements of the author of the book of Genesis as to the knowledge and use of the name Jehovah by the fathers of Israel, and to declare what tends greatly to support their theory of the far less ancient introduction of that sacred name. If this were correct, then the writer of Exodus must be supposed to have most expressly and glaringly contradicted himself, as we have just found him calling "Jehovah Elohim, Jehovah the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob," not only the name, but emphatically the memorial name of Him whom he had just represented as calling Himself "I AM THAT I AM." Further, he must be supposed to contradict this alleged denial of the patriarchal knowledge of Jehovah in the sentence which immediately follows, in which Jehovah is represented as saying,—“And also I have established My covenant with them;” that is to say, with these very fathers to whom He is

supposed to deny the knowledge of His name, Jehovah. What, then, can the words, which seem to convey so direct a denial, really mean? Assured that they could not possibly have been used in such a sense, we were wont to take them in a comparative sense, as they are often taken, as implying, not that the mere name was unknown, but that the full import of the word had not been practically made known, as had the other name, God Almighty (El Shaddai). However, we are persuaded that the simplest and truest method of removing the whole difficulty is to take the statement interrogatively,—“And by My name, Jehovah, was I not known unto them?” as if He would say, “I am Jehovah, the well-known God of your fathers. I appeared to them in the character of El Shaddai, God Almighty; and, by My Name, JEHOVAH, was I not well known to them? Was not Jehovah, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, My peculiar Name? Assuredly it was; and, also, I established My covenant with them,” etc. In this way we have a strong affirmation, and not an express denial of the knowledge in question. Thus, too, we have a statement pertinent to the occasion, consistent with the immediate context and with what had been said of the everlasting name of God, and in harmony with the whole book of Genesis.

Thus do we find reason to regard the name, Jehovah, as specially employed in relation to God as the God of salvation. Still, we are very far from agreeing with Tyler in his remarkably interesting and ingenious work, “Jehovah, the Redeemer God;” or with Macdonald in his able and learned works, “Creation and the Fall,” and, “Introduction to the Pentateuch,” in directly connecting the name with the first promise, as if it simply meant “He who shall be,” “the Coming One,” “He that is to be manifested, or to come.” Nor can we take the words rendered, “I AM THAT I AM,” though in the future, in any mere temporal sense, as if “God would make the announcement, I will be (now) what I shall be (hereafter).”

We rather conceive that the name, which is represented in Scripture as the most glorious as well as dreadful name of God, was selected or suggested as peculiarly fitted to present God in the light of the profoundest truth of Godhead, and that in connection with His mightiest and most merciful work, the work of human redemption. If the name is to be associated with the idea of the future, or to be contemplated according to its meaning, not "He who shall be," but simply, "He shall or will live," "He shall or will be," then let us think rather of a future potential than of a mere future temporal; and thus we may obtain some glimpse of its suitability as the name of Him whose Will must become all in all in earth as it is in heaven, if He would truly recover or redeem mankind. We may now return to the special question in hand, that of the peculiar use of the Divine names in the different portions of the narrative. If the view above given be correct, we may expect to find some illustration to its correctness in the case of the usage referred to.

(a.) Applying this view to the different sections of the narrative, we can fully agree with the authors just referred to with respect to the use to be made of the central idea of Jehovah being peculiarly the God of salvation, and would now make actual use of it in dealing with this remarkable peculiarity as we find it. Thus the name God (Elohim) is, as it ought to be, exclusively used in the account of the universal creation. The entire creative work is in this way ascribed to Him viewed simply as God (Elohim). In beginning the next section, relating almost entirely to primitive man, the sacred writer does two things: *first*, he is careful to connect as one grand work what he had already recorded of the universe with what he is about to record of primitive man,—in fact, to declare the unity of his narrative; and *secondly*, he introduces the name Jehovah in connection with the name Elohim, which alone he had yet employed. Now, what is the natural inference? Why, that He whom he had as yet called Elohim or God, he now calls by the name of Jehovah Elohim (Lord God). Thus

would he practically and effectually say, Jehovah is not one being and Elohim another, but the very God who created the universe, as just set forth. This he virtually reiterates throughout the entire narrative of primitive man.

Be it observed, that it is the usage of the writer or historian himself in both instances, and not that of any of the persons introduced into the history to which we refer. That usage, then, and therefore the whole form of the narrative as connected with it, must be traced to some purpose or design of the writer alone. As already said, that usage is far too peculiar, far too uniform, to be due to mere accident. We have not yet indicated the whole. Having used Elohim alone in the first chapter, and Jehovah Elohim throughout the second and third chapters, he goes on to use Jehovah alone throughout the fourth. If, as in the case of the works of nature, we infer the author's design from the most obvious and natural result, we may infer that here treated of from the effect produced on every intelligent reader who may not have had his mind pre-occupied with some special thought or theory, namely, that the author intended all to understand that the Jehovah of the second section was the Elohim or God of the first. The way in which he conveys this simple and universal impression cannot be called artificial in any bad sense of the word. With simple Divine art, he first keeps the name God before the mind till he had made the full impression of God (Elohim) being the Universal Creator; and next he so unites the name Jehovah with that of Elohim or God, and so continues to use the combined name till he has made the like full impression of Jehovah being the God and Creator of the Universe; and, finally, having thus united, and by union identified the two names, he goes on to use the simple name Jehovah, and continues to use it in connection with the new circumstances, the new worship, and the first recorded sacrifices of the family of Adam, till it appears to be the name of the God of salvation. Such we hold to have been the author's design as inferred from the

natural and universal effect of simply considering the peculiar usage in question.

(d.) Let us now apply the idea of the special selection and employment of the name Jehovah in connection with the work of redemption. This idea suggests the special propriety of the exclusive use of the word Elohim in the record of the creation. It also suggests the great importance of the introduction of the name Jehovah into the second portion of the narrative, and thus of the identification of the God of redemption with the God of creation. Once more, it suggests a very good reason for the sole use of the name Jehovah in all that pertains to the primitive worship of God as Redeemer, after the first promise of redemption had been given, and especially in a narrative of the acceptance of the sacrifice of Abel, by which He was fully recognised as the God of salvation, and of the rejection of the offering of Cain, by which He was treated solely as the God of creation. Thus far all is simple and consistent.

But this is not all. Besides the use of the Divine names by the historian himself, to which alone we have as yet referred, and from which alone we have inferred his purpose, we find certain exceptions, to which we now direct attention; we mean certain cases of the use of the Divine names, not by the writer himself, but by certain of those of whom he wrote. Thus, in the third chapter, we find both Eve and the serpent using the simple name of Elohim (the God of the first chapter), and not the compound name Jehovah Elohim (the Lord God of the second and third chapters). This fact certainly entirely overthrows the theory according to which the various portions of Genesis may be traced to their respective traditionary sources according as the Divine names may chance to be employed: for here we find in the very heart of a narrative, in which the writer himself invariably uses the compound name, Jehovah Elohim (Lord God), he makes those of whom he writes use the simple name Elohim (God):—chapter iii. 1, "And he,"—the serpent,—"said unto the woman, Yea, hath God

(Elohim) said, Ye shall not eat?" etc.; and so verses 2, 3, "And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which (is) in the midst of the garden, God (Elohim) hath said, Ye shall not eat," etc.; and again, in verses 4, 5, "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die; for God (Elohim) doth know," etc.; and not only this, but in this fifth verse we have another instance, "And ye shall be as gods,"—rather, "ye shall be as God (the same name, Elohim), knowing good and evil." This is in perfect keeping with the view of the name Jehovah above given. If Eve had used it before the fall or before the first promise was given, then the incorrectness of that view would have been demonstrated. However, neither Eve nor the serpent used that name. They both refer to the God spoken of in the narrative of the garden, and they speak of Him under the simple name of God (Elohim).

This may not seem to amount to much. But what do we find after the promise of redemption has been given, and after the first parents of the race had taken their place in the new home provided for them, as now under the law of sin on the one hand, and under the law of grace on the other? We find Eve making the first recorded use of the name Jehovah. At the birth of Cain, the first human birth, we find her represented as saying,—“I have gotten a man from Jehovah.” The historian himself had used this name in the two preceding chapters, as he might have done, though it had not been known for many ages after the time referred to; but when he puts it into the mouth of Eve, he leads us to understand that thus early had the sacred name been revealed. This is true, whatever force we give to the words employed, or whether we render, as in the English version, “a man from Jehovah,” or, as some translate, and as the mode of expression would naturally suggest, “a man, Jehovah,” or, “a man, the Jehovah,”—meaning in this case, the promised one. We need

not argue the point thus suggested ; only we may say that, whilst disposed to render, "from Jehovah," we would not regard the absolute Godhead of Jehovah as a sufficient reason for setting aside the other rendering, as we may fairly suppose Eve to have been made acquainted with the Divine name in question, and that in connection with the promise of salvation, and yet not to have been so acquainted with it as the name of God Himself as to be prevented from supposing her firstborn son to be the promised seed, and so from speaking of him as the one whose name she had been led to identify with that of Jehovah. Be all this as it may, we have an instance of the use of the name shortly after the revelation of redemption.

Thus, in every instance the sacred names are employed in harmony with the view taken of the word, Jehovah, as emphatically the name of the covenant God of Abraham, the God of salvation, and also with what we have pointed out as one design of the sacred writer, namely, that of identifying the God of redemption with the God of creation, the God of Israel with the God of the whole earth, nay, of the entire universe. In this way too, we have the finest illustration of the unity and harmony of the narrative from beginning to end.

We might have added illustration to illustration, from the subsequent parts of the book of Genesis, of the use of the name Jehovah in connection with the redemptive work first announced in Eden. We might have more fully alluded to the fact of the offering of Cain being a practical rejection of the God of salvation, and thus being, as we have said, a treatment of Jehovah as if He were simply the God of creation, in fact, as being the open introduction of Deism into the family of the first worshippers of the God of grace and salvation. We might have referred to the fact afterwards recorded of the more public services of the saintly worshippers of early times, as distinguished apparently from such as may have followed a Deistical course not unlike that of Cain, if we may so interpret the

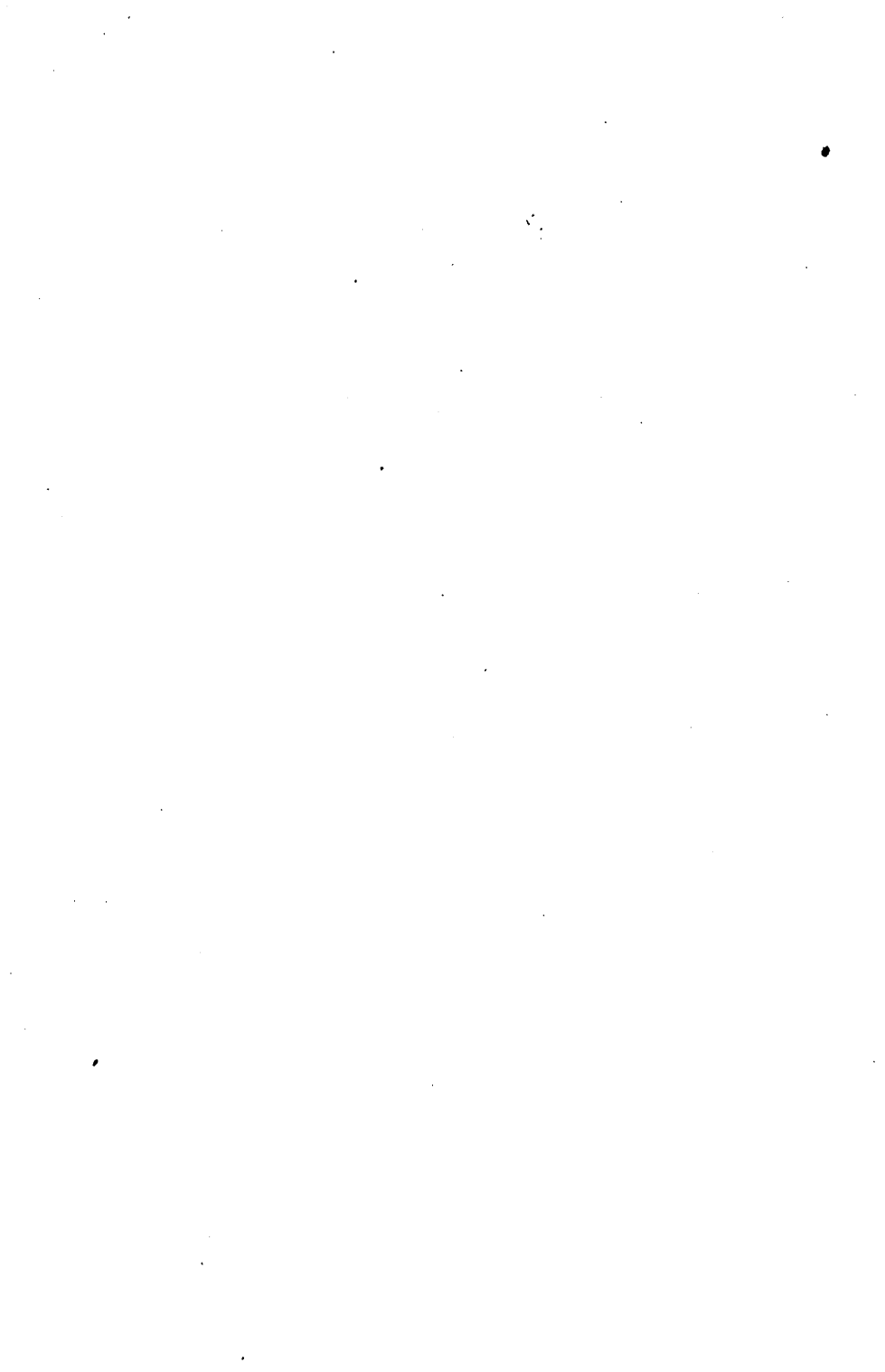
closing words of the fourth chapter, "Then began men to call upon the name of Jehovah." The more the use of this name is traced through the following narrative, especially through that part of it which relates to the "Father of the Faithful," the more shall we be confirmed in our belief of the early use of this sublime and sacred name in connection with the idea of redemption, and the more will we thus perceive the unity and harmony of the most precious and important portion of Scripture which we have been considering.

22. We think, then, that whilst we have found no sufficient reason for supposing any such twofold or manifold origin as would tend to support the correctness of any allegations of essential dissimilarity or circumstantial discordance, we have found the most ample proofs of the consistency of the entire narrative, embodying, as it does, an immense amount of the sublimest and profoundest truth, and written, as it is, in a way fitting it for the instruction of mankind in every age and country. Be it in conclusion observed, however, that we are far from deeming it necessary to maintain any literal sameness of origin. As already said, the work of interpretation ought to be burdened with no needless theory with regard to such a matter. The main, if not the only point is that of the harmony of the narrative. We may yet simply add that, all things and especially the complementary character of the sections being carefully considered, the hypothesis which commends itself to our mind is this, that whilst both parts may have been handed down by early tradition in a form more or less approaching that in which they appear, they were, under the influence of Divine inspiration, so freely used, modified, shaped, that the history as it now stands on the sacred page may be justly regarded as the work of one and the same human author. Thus have been provided for the spiritual good of the simplest minds of least enlightened times or of most imperfect education the richest treasures of Divine and saving knowledge.

Nor can the most enlightened ever cease to stand in need of the precious truths here indicated, and more fully revealed in subsequent portions of Scripture. The unity and harmony which we have been endeavouring to trace we may justly regard as real, and also as typical of that essential unity and harmony which may be traced throughout the entire sacred volume, and in which we may behold one of the surest proofs of a Divine original.

Chapter IV.

EXPOSITION OF THE SECOND SECTION.



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Ch. ii. 4-25.

Ch. ii. 4.—These are the generations of the Heavens and the Earth when they were (being) created, in the day of Jehovah God's making earth and heaven. 5. And no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field yet grew; for Jehovah God had not caused it to rain upon the earth; and a man (there was) not to till the ground.

6. And there rose a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

7. And Jehovah God formed Man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life: and man became a living soul.

8. And Jehovah God planted a Garden in Eden eastward; and there He put the man whom He had formed. 9. And Jehovah God caused to grow out of the ground every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, and the Tree of Life in the midst of the garden, and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

10. And a River (was) coming forth from Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. 11. The name of the first (is) Pison: that (is) it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where (there is) gold. 12. And the gold of that land is good; there (is) bdellium and the onyx stone. 13. And the name of the second river (is) Gihon: that (is) it which compasseth the whole land of Cush. 14. And the name of the third river

(is) Hiddekel: that (is) it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river, that (is) Euphrates.

15. And Jehovah God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to dress and to keep it. 16. And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; 17. but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest of it thou shalt surely die.

18. And Jehovah God said, (It is) not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helpmeet for him. 19. And Jehovah God formed out of the ground every beast of the field, and every fowl of the heaven; and brought (them) to the man to see what he would call them: and whatsoever the man called every living creature, that (was) its name. 20. And the man gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the heaven, and to every beast of the field; but for the man he found not an help meet for himself.

21. And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in the place of it. 22. And Jehovah God formed the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman, and brought her to the man.

23. And the man said, This now (is) bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.

24. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall be one flesh.

25. And they were both naked, the man and his wife; and they were not ashamed.

I.

“These are the generations of the Heavens and the Earth, when they were (being) created, in the day of Jehovah God’s making earth and heaven. And no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field yet grew: for Jehovah God had not caused it to rain upon the earth; and a man (there was) not to till the ground.”

1. Thus does the sacred writer connect the two sections of this narrative, and pass from the one to the other. We may here say, that what we now treat as the second might be more correctly viewed as the first half of that section. However, it seems convenient to consider separately the two very distinct though consecutive parts of the history of primitive man, that which relates to his creation and instruction as well as to his Edenic home, and that which pertains to his temptation and its mighty results. Here we treat exclusively of the former.

2. To what we have said, when treating of the unity of the narrative, we may here add the following:—

(a.) The Hebrew word rendered “generations” does not refer to the origination of the works alluded to, but to persons or things derivatively or otherwise connected with them.

(b.) These words so clearly show that the first portion of the history was present to the sacred writer’s mind, directly alluding, as they do, to the first ten verses of it, that we may well wonder that the idea of a different authorship should have obtained so much learned support.

(c.) As elsewhere fully brought out, we view the author as here going back to the special period of universal development when the earth was prepared for the introduction of at least the earlier vegetable forms. At that time the higher and more useful species were not produced, but were added at a more befitting period, when the creative work was further advanced, and when the conditions of the due supply of rain were secured. Thus does the idea of a slow as well as progressive work clearly appear to be that of the sacred author.

(d.) For the treatment of the vexed question pertaining to the Divine names, God (Elohim) and Lord God (Jehovah Elohim), we would refer to our discussion of the unity of the two sections. We think we have there proved, that we have not even the shadow of a reason for supposing the existence

and use of two distinct and somewhat inconsistent documents, or the combination of mere portions of like inconsistent history. As elsewhere said, we by no means set aside all use of tradition. From the peculiar manner in which the Divine names are introduced, we infer that the intention was simply to suggest that the Jehovah, of whom he was about to write throughout his entire history, as the God of salvation, was no other, but One and the same God with the God and Creator of the universe.

(e.) This early identification of the God of redemption with the God of creation, the God of revelation with the God of nature, was supremely wise. When the sacred history was written, Jehovah was the well-known name of the God of Israel, or of the covenant God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that is to say, of the God of grace and salvation. Not only did this mean, that the Divine Being, under this name, was progressively revealing Himself to mankind, it further meant, that by acting as the covenant God of the patriarchs and of Israel, and by thus fulfilling His promises to them and to mankind through them, He would give a full and practical demonstration of His own Existence as well as a glorious revelation of His Character, all the while carrying on the grand work of the world's redemption. In fact, as that work is in its essential characteristics supernatural, the means by which it was to be effected, and by which what we have called the practical demonstration of the Divine existence was at the same time to be fully given, were also to be to no small extent supernatural. Hence the use of miracles and prophecy; hence the inspiration of the great teachers of mankind; hence the mission of Jesus Christ, involving supernatural agency from first to last. Further, that Jehovah meant to give this perpetual demonstration is proved by His direct appeal to His miraculous works, and especially to His prophetic announcements, as such an all-sufficient demonstration of His very being.

Two important ideas are thus suggested: on the one hand,

that Jehovah is emphatically the God of Supernatural Revelation; and, on the other, that in revealing Himself and in redeeming mankind He had, before this narrative was written, made special use of the Abrahamic family, calling Himself, as already said, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Now, let us note the natural effect of the use here made of the Divine name. Jehovah was thus practically declared to be the God of the whole earth, the God of the entire universe, and therefore no mere local, no mere family, no mere national divinity. It was assuredly important thus at the very outset to provide against all narrow and erroneous and mischievous conceptions, by showing that He, who seemed to reveal Himself as the God and Saviour of only a few, was in reality the God and Saviour of all; and that, instead of being partial to that few, He was simply making Himself known to them, that ultimately He might make Himself known to mankind. Nor let it be said that this is to draw out of the passage before us more than it could have been intended to contain or convey: for the sacred writer afterwards clearly indicates as much in the Abrahamic promise, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed,"—words which practically declare, as do the entire Scriptures, that Jehovah is the God and Redeemer of the whole world.

(f.) We may add one other remark on a kindred subject. The God of revelation being thus early identified with the God of creation, we are, at the very beginning of the sacred volume called upon to seek a perfect and consistent revelation of Jehovah, the God of creation and redemption, as well in His Works as in His Word; so that Science and Scripture combined are to be viewed as one revelation of Jehovah. The two volumes form but one book. We are virtually commanded to study both. Every real accession of the knowledge of nature is to be deemed an accession of the knowledge of God. Thus does the earliest Scripture commend the pursuit of the latest science. Never should the science of any degree

of advancement discourage the study of scripture. Whilst imperfectly known, they may appear to give discordant testimony. So the character of the same man, acting in different spheres and engaged in different kinds of work, say as a king, in the wider sphere and severer government of his kingdom on the one hand, and as a father, in the narrower circle and milder rule of his family on the other, may be perfectly consistent and alike good ; and yet to imperfect knowledge may seem, in many of its manifestations, utterly inconsistent and exceedingly unlike that of one and the same man. Let us, then, be careful lest we hastily infer inconsistency between the truth of Jehovah as expressly revealed in Scripture, or indicated by words or deeds ascribed to Him there, and the truth of God as indirectly revealed in nature and more or less involved in every induction of science. Thus will it, in the end, be assuredly found that the author of this ancient record has at the very outset pointed to the certainly true though often contested fact that the Jehovah of Scripture is the God of the universe.

II.

“And there rose a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.”

1. We have designedly separated these from the preceding words, that we may indicate what we deem their real meaning. We do not regard them as stating, as our authorised version suggests, that the rising mist or vapour was intended to supply the temporary want of rain, but as declaring the simple fact that the necessary conditions of the proper and perpetual supply of rain were in due time secured, or that the want just alluded to was now removed. We do not regard that want as total. Its removal, therefore, did not consist of the mere supply of a certain amount of the precious element, but rather of the establishment of the conditions of a normal and perma-

nent supply. In fact, we have here a very brief, but very correct, statement as to the real nature and sources of rain.

2. It may be well to note here the wonderful simplicity and peculiarity of the author's description. The word mist or vapour is certainly used in a plural sense of all the mists and vapours which ascend perpetually from every region of the terraqueous globe, and which fall in countless showers to water the whole of the more or less fertile soil. Thus was provision made for the healthy growth of the higher forms of vegetable life, and thus for the creation of what would in good time supply the wants of man. As just said, we wish it to be observed that all this is expressed with a simplicity and a brevity which may well astonish, and which may help us to understand and to illustrate the meaning of other pregnant expressions, alike simple and brief.

III.

“And Jehovah God formed Man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life ; and man became a living soul.”

1. Such we regard as an account of the formation of Adam, not in any respect inconsistent with that of the first chapter, but in the truest sense complementary of it. In there pointing to his dominion over the world, the sacred historian most wisely alluded to his higher and more spiritual nature—to the Divine likeness—to what, in fact, constituted him the son and heir of God. Here again, as indicating his comparative feebleness, and also his relation to the earth of which man is now the mortal inhabitant, his lower nature, his material frame, is specially referred to. In this way we may clearly perceive the necessity of combining both parts of the record if we would form a full and true conception of primitive man.

2. We may just notice the presence of the definite article—“formed *the* man”—which has led some to infer a direct re-

ference to the first chapter, and thus an argument for the unity of the two sections. Whilst such a reference may have been intended, the freeness of the Hebrew usage seems to forbid us from putting any real weight on the argument. May there not possibly be rather a reference to the man spoken of in the immediate context, as if the writer meant to say that the man just said to have been wanting to cultivate the soil was now formed, and the want thus removed, as the want of rain had just been said to be removed by means of the ascending mists and vapours?

3. The bodily frame of the man, Jehovah God is declared to have formed or fashioned. The material constituents were the clay. Jehovah was the Divine potter. With wondrous skill and power He curiously and mysteriously reared the frail tenement of the Divine spirit of man. As the word "mist" is used of all the mists or aqueous vapours concerned in the formation of rain; so here the word "dust," or rather the expression "dust of the ground," is used of the sum of all those elementary or proximate principles of which the human body is composed. As already hinted at, as well the feebleness as the earthly origin of man is thus suggested. Hence the name of man, not from the colour of the material, red earth, alluding to "the *red* colour of the Caucasian tribes," but rather from the word here used to signify the ground, *Adam* from *adamah*, as in the Latin *homo*, from *humus*.

4. "And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," or more literally, "the breath of lives." The idea usually and naturally suggested by this descriptive account is, that the creation of Adam involved two distinct, if not successive Divine acts: that of framing the material body, and that of inspiring both physical and spiritual life. This idea is supported by the statement in the first chapter as to the Divine likeness, and also by the peculiar character and directness of the act spoken of,—that of Divine inspiration. Some, we may add, have

based an argument on the use of the plural in the expression, "the breath of lives," as if implying more than one kind of life ; namely, the animal, which is common to all, and the spiritual, which is peculiar to man. On all this we may observe :—

(a.) That this argument is fully disproved by the fact of a like expression being used of the inferior creatures, as in chapter vii. 15, "Wherein is the spirit of lives," referring to these alone ; and also in the same chapter, verse 22, "All in whose nostrils (was) the breath of the spirit of lives," alluding to rational and irrational alike. The plural usage, then, taken by itself, can be regarded as proving nothing with respect to the spiritual nature or specific superiority of man.

(b.) This by no means implies that the mere physical life of man is here intended. We are far from going the length of Kalisch, who says, "The higher intellectual capacity of man is here not indicated ; it is the tendency of this section to show the progress of man from the state of instinct to that of reason ; in that stage he is, in his will and activity, only a part of the general creation. . . . He has, by an internal crisis, to advance to manhood, to acquire his superiority, and to rise to a resemblance with God." It is true the words here employed are used of animal life in general ; but we cannot therefore conclude that, in both cases, they mean the same thing, any more than we are bound to give precisely the same force to the word "spirit" in the expressions, "the spirit of man," and "the spirit of the beast," as many would, if we were not expressly told of the mighty difference implied in the fact that the one "goeth upward," while the other "goeth downward to the earth." The words before us, then, though of course indicating no difference, no superiority, may be used of what we may otherwise or elsewhere learn, to be possessed of the highest endowments, involving not only marked superiority in rank, but also specific difference in kind. To affirm that the section, in which man's moral probation, with all its im-

plied mental and moral and spiritual capabilities, is recorded, is designed "to show the progress of man from the state of instinct to that of reason," is certainly to prove forgetfulness of the essential conditions of all responsibility. As already said, such a probation, with its mighty issues, presupposes high moral character, if not the aid of even a Divine inspiration. At any rate, this section cannot be satisfactorily interpreted, unless on the supposition that "the breath of lives," however used of the lower animals, was here employed with respect to Adam in the very highest sense, and in keeping with the previous statement as to the Divine image or likeness.

(c.) We therefore admit the force of the argument based on what is said of the act of direct inspiration. That act of itself separates man from all other creatures, and exalts him immeasurably above them, especially when connected, as it should be, with the significant words, "Let Us make man in Our image." We may well repeat, then, that in order to form a full and correct conception of man, we must combine both parts of the record, the words here used of human life as they are elsewhere of animal life in general, with those used of man exclusively, as being alone endowed with a spiritual nature or alone created in the image of God.

(d.) At the same time we would admit that, as Scripture here and elsewhere employs the same expression to describe animal life in general and human life in particular, physical science finds it difficult, if not impossible, to draw a specific distinction between the higher and the lower life of man, or between that higher life and the life common to him and all inferior beings. Man is, indeed, of higher physical organization, and thus far physical science can demonstrate his vast superiority. Still, if we would discern the mighty distinction referred to, we must not merely study the differences of bodily structure, but contemplate the phenomena of life in the clear light of human consciousness, or of a sound spiritual philosophy, which will be found to agree with the like clear light

of Scripture in revealing the true grandeur of man, which some would trace to his power of articulate speech, some to the possession of reason, some to that of a moral, and some to that of a religious nature, but which it seems wiser to trace to all these combined, or simply, with Scripture, to his creation after the likeness of God.

(*e.*) We must not understand the description here given too literally or too precisely, as if the writer meant to ascribe two really separate and successive works to the Almighty Creator, or as if he represented the Divine operation as so mechanical as to be unworthy of God, and beyond all reasonable belief. A double work is certainly described. The two parts are of necessity consecutively alluded to. The consecutiveness, however, is that of the description rather than of the work described.

(*f.*) We may add, that, so far from being required to take the words in any mere mechanical sense, we might, if no other reason stood in the way, even interpret them to some considerable extent in keeping with the theory of evolution. Divine agency being fully acknowledged, we could not deny the possibility of the use of some organic form as a medium in the development of human life. At the same time, there would seem to be necessarily implied a direct creative act, by which the higher or specifically human element of life was superadded, as the superior physical organization of man is held by certain evolutionists to involve the interposition of some such direct act of God. The words, we say, like those of the first section, would at least bear an interpretation of this nature. Still, apart from other considerations, we may remark that it is vain to make positive use of their freeness and generality in order to lend some Scriptural support to the theory in question, and yet to overlook the very great, if not insuperable, difficulty of interpreting with like freeness and generality, or consistently with that theory, the more express account of the formation of Eve.

5. "And man became a living soul," or "a living being." We may simply remark in passing, that this expression, like that already considered, "the breath of lives," whilst by no means positively affirming the superiority of man, or whilst used in close connection with the idea of his bodily frame, is yet to be viewed as employed in perfect consistency with what is clearly implied in the context, and expressly stated in the first chapter, with respect to his dignity as a spiritual being.

6. It may be well here to allude to this passage in its relation to the question of the natural immortality of the soul, which has been somewhat fully discussed of late in connection with the wider and deeper question of the final destiny of man, especially that of the impenitent. We need not say that, on the simple ground of its created nature, emphatically its immateriality and consequent indivisability, it has been often argued, less frequently, perhaps, now than formerly, that the human soul is naturally eternal, or immortal. We have no doubt this argument has been carried too far. Assuming the fact of immateriality, the full logical consequence may be expressed pretty exactly thus : that it may be fairly used, not so much by itself as in connection with certain moral reasons, to form a basis, more or less strong, according as these may appear to different minds, for the hope, belief, or assurance of immortality. Some, again, rejecting at once the more common belief of endless suffering, and the less common opinion of final restoration, and maintaining the idea of a future punishment, eternal in its results, and yet limited in its conscious duration, have gone to the other extreme, and made use of this brief account to support their idea of the natural mortality of man, or that between man and the inferior creatures the real difference amounted solely to this, that the former, endowed with higher powers, and capable of moral probation, was Divinely granted the opportunity, necessarily denied to the latter, of so obeying the Divine law as to secure the reward of

immortality from the hand of his approving Creator. This opportunity he failed rightly to use ; and, thus failing, he came under, or rather remained under the universal law of natural mortality.

With respect to all this, we may remark :—

(a.) That we have already admitted that, taken by themselves, the descriptive words prove no specific superiority on the part of man.

(b.) That this is true, just as well of his moral nature as of his natural immortality ; so that we might as logically use the words in disproof of the former as they have been used in disproof of the latter. In this way it might be argued that they imply no more capacity in man than in the lower animals for moral probation, or for rising, through obedience to moral law, to a Divinely promised immortality. In fact, of themselves the words prove absolutely nothing either way. As more than once said, we ought not to separate them from the context, or from those in the first chapter, but to study both sections as suggestive of one true and complete conception of man. Thus shall we be rightly led to inquire how far the whole, and especially that which pertains to the Divine image, or that which relates to moral probation, bears on the question of immortality.

(c.) By so doing we shall find, we think, the argument in question by no means necessary towards the support of the peculiar doctrine which it is used to uphold,—we mean that of the final destruction of the impenitent. In the first instance, it is employed as if immortality were set forth in this narrative as virtually the reward of human obedience. Now, we feel fully persuaded that, here in the beginning and everywhere to the end of Scripture, immortality is implicitly or explicitly regarded as the Divinely gifted right of every created being who is worthy of being called a child or son of God, a right not achieved by obedience to law, but involved in sonship itself, yet a right which may be justly forfeited and for ever lost

through rebellion against the One Eternal Father, or through neglect or contempt of the obligations of sonship. Adam, then, was created with immortality as his Divinely gifted birth-right, simply because created in the Divine image, and therefore a son and heir of God. He could not acquire such a right by legal obedience ; though he could and did lose it by his act of positive disobedience. Further, and in the second instance, we have no authority in this account to maintain, that, because created in the Divine likeness, his spiritual being was so constituted as to be itself imperishable or immortal, or, apart from the continued sustaining power of the almighty Creator, capable of eternal existence. This is true of every created being. Without the continued support of almighty power, no creature, from the mightiest angel to the tiniest insect, could continue to exist. Thus the argument in question is not needed to support the doctrine which it is used to uphold ; because, if man failed to fulfil the purposes of his creation, or to act according to the obligations of sonship, or to retain his true likeness to God, no satisfactory reason can possibly be assigned in support of his continued filial claim on the eternal Father for the aid of that almighty power on which all life depends. If, therefore, God was pleased to maintain the forfeited life of Adam, He must be supposed to have done so either for the purpose of punishment or with a view to redemption. Thus no argument can be justly founded on the nature of the human soul either for or against the doctrine of the eternity of positive punishment. The question of a temporary or of an eternal state of suffering must be settled by no general or abstract reasoning concerning the nature of mind, spirit, soul, or thinking principle, by whatever name it may be called, nor even by any kind of exclusively rational or moral argument, but by an appeal to express revelation alone.

IV.

“And Jehovah God planted a Garden in Eden eastward ; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And Jehovah God caused to grow out of the ground every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food, and the Tree of Life in the midst of the garden, and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.”

1. We may here repeat what we have elsewhere hinted at with respect to the order of the Divine procedure thus apparently indicated. The statement would naturally suggest that man was created before the garden was planted. However, we may view the order of the narrative rather as that of thought or purpose than as that of mere temporal sequence, intended to indicate that the garden was planted for man rather than that man was made for the garden. This is in accordance with one of the most marked features of both sections of the narrative. The Divine work of creation on the one hand and of plantation on the other may, for aught decidedly proved by the words, have been contemporaneous. The matter is of no essential consequence, and is here thus alluded to simply that we may note or illustrate the importance of refraining from drawing inferences or building opinions where the data are palpably insufficient.

2. The Divine agency is here fully acknowledged. How far that agency is to be accounted direct and how far indirect, we are not informed and cannot determine. There is a spreading dislike towards the admission or even the supposition of any direct supernatural or miraculous procedure on the part of the Divine Being. To create man himself seems to not a few beneath the serene and silent dignity of the great Supreme. As already observed, we deem very much of this dislike traceable to a latent or unconscious anthropomorphism on the part of some who most strongly condemn all anthropomorphism. If we were fully alive to the mighty contrast between the perfect ease with which almighty power may, and doubtless does, realise the wonderful designs of God, and the

real difficulty attending many of the feeble efforts of man, we might perceive, in all our doubt or disbelief with respect to such agency as that referred to, only the proof of unreasonableness or of our incapacity to appreciate the mind of God. At the same time, much is spoken of in Scripture as due to Divine agency, when the subordinate agency of the natural laws or the immediate agency of man is implied. If it was not beneath the mind or dignity of the great Creator to desire or purpose to behold a race reflecting the glory of His own likeness, it could not be unworthy of Him directly or indirectly to create the man of this history ; and if the creation of man was worthy of Him, it could not be unworthy of Him to provide, naturally or supernaturally, such a home as is here described, or to make such provisions for his happiness as his nature might require. We may here add the judicious words of Calvin :—"Moses says, that God had *planted*, accomodating himself, by a simple and uncultivated style, to the capacity of the vulgar. For since the majesty of God, as it really is, cannot be expressed, the Scripture is wont to describe it according to the manner of men." It might be well to keep this in view in the study and exposition of Scripture at large, and especially in the interpretation of such passages as that relating to the formation of Adam, or as that which we have yet to consider relating to the formation of Eve.

3. We might here treat of the suitableness of the home thus provided. We might ask, Is the idea of the character and abode of primitive man, as conveyed by the words of Scripture, really worthy of the blessed God to embody in fact? We may safely affirm that no superior ideal or allegorical description has ever been presented to the human mind. This picture of the Eden home of man has been of incalculable practical value, vastly more so than that of any other home possessed by any of the wisest and best of mankind.

4. The more carefully we study the details the more fully

shall we be convinced of its worth. The garden was situated in Eden, a region at once salubrious and delightful,—the name conveying the idea of pleasure, enjoyment, delightsomeness, doubtless from the same root as ἡδονή, the Greek word for pleasure. It was planted, says Kalisch, “in the east, in the region of light, where the sun sends his first and purest rays; in that region with which the notions of joy and splendour were naturally associated.” The trees were ornamental as well as useful; it was garden and orchard in one. Doubtless the loveliest flowers gratified the finer tastes, as the most varied fruit supplied every want. Human nature appeared in purest, richest, gentlest form. All surrounding nature, animate and inanimate, was fitted to minister good of every kind. Room was wisely provided for manual as well as mental work. However simple and homely, life in Eden was noble and manly. The employment of the first of the race has been the dignified and delightful recreation of the greatest and wisest and best of his posterity. The Divine Parent was seen to be the greatest of all workers; the Divine son was to honour and pursue all useful work. The picture here presented to our view is full of strength and beauty; we can see no trace of sickly sentiment. The central mystic figures are far from suggesting luxuriance of imagination. These trees are wonderfully real. They point to what most deeply concerns every human being,—to duty, to what man owes to God; they were intended and fitted to exercise the highest principles of human nature. Let it not be said, Be all this as it may, how could such a home be appreciated and enjoyed now? Such a question is simply out of place. It was fitted for its design as no other can even yet be conceived to have been. If the tenant had prized it at its proper worth, and served his Divine Benefactor as he ought, doubtless a befitting home would have never been wanting to himself or his posterity as every step in the progressive culture of the future might have required.

V.

"And a stream was coming forth from Eden to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first (is) Pison : that (is) it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where (there is) gold ; and the gold of that land (is) good : there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second stream (is) Gihon : that (is) it which compasseth the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third stream (is) Hiddekel : that (is) it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth stream, that (is) Euphrates."

1. This stream, sometimes called the river of paradise, has been viewed as the prototype of that described in the Apocalypse as flowing, clear as crystal, from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and supplying the heavenly Jerusalem with the exhaustless waters of eternal life. With it, too, has been compared the gentle stream to which Milton alludes, "Siloa's brook, that flowed fast by the oracle of God," and which, till recent research dissipated the beautiful illusion, was supposed to come from a fountain directly underneath the Jewish temple. All three were thus associated symbolically with the same Divine truth, the same immortal hope. However fitted to be the emblem of the fountain of life, and however pleasingly we may associate this with that "river whose streams make glad the city of God," we must not imagine a fountain rising within the Edenic garden, and issuing thence in so many streams to enrich the regions around it, as if they were and as there has been supposed, some real analogy between this story and that of either Indian or Persian mythology, according to which all the chief rivers of the world are fancied to flow from one central fountain. We are here simply assured of a Divine arrangement, by which the sacred spot was made "a well-watered garden, whose waters fail not."

2. Beautiful as may be the idea of a pure and gentle stream, here sweetly murmuring and there silently gliding along, and, whilst lending fertility to the soil and freshness to the air, awakening many a hallowed thought in the minds of those

whose delight it may have been to walk along its shady or its flowery banks, we are yet constrained to add, that the very brief and peculiar mode of expression here employed has given rise to no little doubt as to its reality on the one hand and to no little controversy as to the correctness of the sacred author's geographical knowledge on the other. Nay, a geographical difficulty is thus suggested apparently as great as any one of a geological or astronomical nature connected with the first chapter. No fewer than four large rivers, two of them well known, the Tigris and Euphrates, are seemingly described as branches or arms of that by which the garden was watered, or as virtually having one common fountain-head. Such a union of the Tigris and Euphrates, not to speak of the less certainly indentified Pison and Gihon, would imply so vast a change in the physical geography of the region as, even making all reasonable allowance for the lapse of time, we can hardly suppose to have occurred.

3. The difficult subject thus suggested cannot possibly be fairly treated unless at very considerable length. We think it better, therefore, to deal with it in a separate chapter, which, as doubtless dry and uninteresting to some, may be read or not, according to inclination.

4. We may here, however, indicate what appear the fair results of pretty full investigation.

(a.) That our English version, suggesting as it does the idea of a river flowing out of Eden to water the garden, cannot possibly be correct; we cannot suppose the sacred writer to have intended to say that a river flowed out of a region to water a spot within it.

(b.) That he evidently alludes, as the word will bear, to the rise of the river, flood, or mass of waters spoken of.

(c.) That the word here rendered "river" is to be taken collectively of the whole river-system of Eden, and not of any one single stream. In this way the writer is to be viewed as

meaning that God, in providing the needful means for the end in view, took care, as was certainly necessary, not that some tiny rivulet, whose waters might soon decay, should flow through the garden, as has been supposed ; but that the whole water-flow of the region should be such as to secure the constant as well as needful supplies. This consists with the very free and general meaning of the word, and with every enlightened view which can be taken of the case, as only by special arrangement of the entire system could a suitable and permanent supply be provided.

(*d.*) In this way we are to regard the four great or principal rivers as formed, not by the division of the stream which actually watered the garden, as our English version suggests, but by that of the general water-flow of Eden, be that region viewed as great or small. Being simply the four chief rivers, they by no means include the entire number of streams rising and flowing within the region referred to.

(*e.*) As we are at liberty to regard Eden as comparatively limited or as embracing the whole of the world known to the sacred writer, we are left free to select any four great rivers which may appear best to answer the descriptive account here given. Two of these all agree in regarding as the Tigris and Euphrates. Difference of opinion obtains as to the remaining two. Some maintain stoutly that the Ganges or Indus and the Nile are evidently intended. This would consist with the interpretation which we have given, as we have simply to suppose a sufficient extension of the territory intended. However, as the sources of the Tigris and Euphrates are by no means distant, we conceive it far more natural to suppose a reference to two other rivers whose sources are of like proximity. Two such, answering, we think, the descriptions given, may be found in the Kur and the Araxes. We have thus four rivers rising in Armenia at no great distance from one another, deserving of the name of chief or principal here given to them, and all answering to the terms of the descriptive account.

(f.) The conclusion from this is, that the sacred record supplies us with no exact or rather with no sufficient data with which it is possible to determine the real site of the garden. We cannot even discover the exact manner in which it was watered. This silence of Scripture with respect to what is simply curious is wise in itself, and can by no means disprove the view taken of the subject in question.

VI.

“And Jehovah God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress and to keep it. And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day thou eatest of it thou shalt surely die.”

1. Having described the garden and the river-system connected with it, the sacred writer now returns to what he had already said of Adam: “And Jehovah God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden.” As to this, it has been remarked by Quarry, “that verse 15 is not a mere repetition of the latter clause of verse 8, describing the first introduction of man into the garden, seems plain, partly from the construction, the consecutiveness of the successive steps being indicated by the continued use of the future with the conversive *vaw*, while the preterite with the pluperfect sense would properly have been used if this fifteenth verse went back to the time of verse 8.” We admit that here there is not a *mere* repetition. Dr. Quarry justly adds, that the verb is in the causative form in this place, implying that the man was caused or made to remain in the garden rather than simply put into it, as had been previously said. Still we do hold that the sacred writer does go back to the very time of verse 8.

This appears clear from two things:—*first*, the words which intervene between the 8th and the 15th verses, or between the first and the second reference to Adam being put and being

caused to remain in the garden, do not refer to any intervening event or events so as to imply any advance of time; and *secondly*, the clause, "God took the man," seems most decidedly to allude to what God did, not after he was put into the garden, but by way of putting him and causing him to remain there. We take notice of this, not so much because of its importance as because of the illustration which it suggests of the peculiarity of the writer's style to which we have had so often to advert. He had stated that God had put the man into the garden. Now he goes back, and tells us that He took him and made him abide there, thus suggesting what appears to be hinted at in chapters iii. 19, that he was formed elsewhere, and then Divinely conducted to his appointed home. In this way, too, he illustrates what we have already said with respect to his subsequent allusion to the formation of the lower animals. He speaks of them as created and brought to Adam, as if he alluded to them for the first time, and as if they were created after him, when he merely means to introduce the fact of their creation in connection with what he is about to say concerning them; just as here he speaks of God taking Adam and making him dwell in the garden, as if he had said nothing of his being placed there, and that simply in the way of connection with what he was about to say of Adam and the two chief trees of the garden. In both instances we have an illustration of the order which we have treated as distinguishing the whole narrative, we mean that of thought and not of time.

2. As we are not expressly told in what way the garden was prepared, whether directly by the hand of God or indirectly through the slow operations of nature, so we are not distinctly informed as to the manner in which Adam was conducted to his garden-home, or there taught of God concerning his manual work on the one hand and his moral obligations on the other. The whole scope of this narrative would suggest that

God appeared to him under some visible form, such, for instance, as that in which He is afterwards said to have appeared to Abraham and other highly favoured ones, in the character of the Angel of Jehovah or the Angel-Jehovah. Taken by themselves, the words before us might be regarded as implying no external manifestation, or as being equivalent to such as we find used of Jesus, who is represented as "led by the Spirit into the wilderness." Whatever the manner, God may be viewed as having virtually done for Adam what He would have in reality done by acting outwardly and formally as the words seem naturally to suggest,—thus deeply impressing his mind with a sense of his relation and obligation to his Divine Parent and Benefactor. As yet he was all alone. His temporary solitude, as connected with the Divine procedure, may have had, as it may have been intended to have, the finest effect on his moral and spiritual nature. At any rate we may be fully assured that, however silent the sacred historian, these first solitary hours were not allowed to pass away without being used in the best possible manner for his highest good. We may simply add, by way of not improbable inference, that, as these first instructions preceded the formation of Eve, they may be viewed as intentionally thus early imparted to Adam, specially in his representative character as the peculiarly responsible head of the future human race.

3. "To dress it and to keep it." In the sacred volume we meet with no idea of an earthly paradise in the past, or of a heavenly paradise in the future, of mere delicious repose, far less, like the Mohammedan, or that of many an imagination, of ceaseless sensuous enjoyment. Work and worship are there wisely associated, and represented as the designed and dignified end of every son of God, in every part of His creation, whether angel or man. They are so, and that most fitly, in the words before us. The whole man, soul and body, is required to serve and honour the blessed Creator. However

rich and beautiful in itself, or however perfect as the product of creative skill, without a constant miracle the garden could not have continued without overgrowth or decay, if tended and dressed by no intelligent hand of man. Nor, apart from such work as that here enjoined, could the physical and mental constitution of Adam have retained or unfolded those varied powers with which it was endowed. In such circumstances, no higher or fitter manual employment could have been appointed. We must not, with some, disparage either home or work, as if the highest ideal of both were here intended, or as if, even on the supposition of continued uprightness, no fit sphere would have been provided for the culture and development of that progressive nature with which mankind has been so richly endowed.

4. We need hardly say, that not a few would here interpret rather allegorically than literally. The sacred writer is supposed to have given a beautiful and interesting picture, not drawn from the reality, nor drawn from mere imagination, but simply expressive of the virtual Divine treatment of the first man, or, at least, of the first portion of mankind. Virtually, the same kind of spiritual instruction, though less direct, and a similar kind of moral test, though less formal, are thought to have been imparted and applied. The result is regarded as virtually the same as that supposed to be here allegorically set forth. An adequate basis is viewed as thus laid for the subsequent treatment of the entire race, in accordance with the general scope of Scripture, as really fallen on the one hand, and as destined to be afterwards redeemed on the other. We do not propose to treat this view of the subject as simply inadmissible. We would not affirm, generally, that some such allegorical form could not possibly have been introduced. At the same time, we do think that, considered in itself or in relation to the entire context or as a most important portion of Scripture, this passage appears to have been assuredly in-

tended to be taken in the ordinary sense. An allegorical account of the fall of man does not seem an appropriate or natural introduction to a literal history of his redemption. At any rate, our present aim is to treat the whole narrative according to its plain literal meaning, leaving it thus to speak for itself, and to prove how far it is in full harmony with science on the one hand, and truly free from moral or spiritual objection on the other.

5. We may go on, then, to remark that, according to the 9th verse of this chapter and the 3rd of the next, the two wonderful trees, the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, are said to have been in the midst of the garden, and thus apparently to have occupied the most prominent place in it, and that, doubtless, in keeping with their real and all-important design. We need not say how vast the interest associated with this central spot; nor need we wonder at the numberless discussions to which these two central objects have given rise. One thing seems certain, that, as the garden with all the other trees gave appropriate mental and physical employment to Adam, these two trees were provided and fitted to give like appropriate exercise to his higher nature, be it called moral, spiritual, immortal, or Divine, by which he was prepared for union and fellowship with the Unseen and the Eternal.

6. If of so high and important a use, in what light are we to contemplate them? Many have believed them to have been endowed with the most powerful and mysterious properties,—the one, in order to support human life for ever,—the other, in order to impart the actual knowledge of good and evil. As very clearly setting forth this view, and as at least expressing what he regards the sacred writer to have meant, we may quote the following from Kalisch:—"In the midst, and forming its very heart, were two wonderful trees, bearing more precious fruit than the rest; they did not afford

a merely momentary enjoyment, their effects were as lasting as they were miraculous,—the one secured eternal life, the other roused the slumbering intellect, it taught reason to reflect, and enabled the judgment to distinguish between moral good and moral evil. Man was then still undiscerning, and, therefore, irresponsible and guiltless ; he was in the state of harmless childhood ; he was not yet called upon ‘to reject the evil and to choose the good,’ or to pursue, with self-conscious energy, the way of virtue and glory.” Again : “Adam was originally designed by God for perpetual life ; he was destined for unceasing happiness, in childlike simplicity ; but he should not, like God, combine eternal life with discerning wisdom ; it was so ordained, not from any motive of envy on the part of the Deity, but for his own felicity. Though he was, therefore, permitted to eat of the tree of life, he was severely forbidden to taste of the fruits of the tree of knowledge. But he was disobedient ; he acquired the Divine intelligence by tasting of the latter ; and he thus called death upon himself ; and, lest he should eat again of the former, and thus counteract and frustrate the Divine punishment, he was excluded from the garden where it grew ; for, after his disobedience, any *previous* participation of the tree of life was without effect. . . . Man lost a great boon by his levity, but God granted him a greater gift in its stead ; He bestowed upon him that intelligence which raises him to the dignity of the self-conscious master of the earth. Man forfeited the easy material existence of paradise ; but he attained in its place a spiritual life, which breaks through all earthly limits, which conquers time, and reaches with its thoughts and its deeds to the gates of eternity.”

7. Such are the ideas which the sacred author is supposed by this learned and beautiful writer to have intended to convey. However, if the above were a correct interpretation, the strangest inferences must be assuredly drawn. *First*: instead

of being denounced as the greatest and deadliest enemy, sin must be honoured as the earliest and best friend of man, raising him out of a low and dull material existence to all the exalted rank and dignified enjoyments of intellectual, moral, and spiritual life. *Secondly* : by man's first act of disobedience the otherwise impassable barrier was removed, and he was enabled to enter into a state of fellowship with God. *Thirdly* : the tempter of the next chapter, instead of being justly called by Jesus "the father of lies," and "a murderer from the beginning," must be rather viewed as the friend of truth and the benefactor of mankind. He, in this case, expressed the simple fact, when he assured Eve of rising, through disobedience, to a likeness to God. *Fourthly* : the original state of man being one of immaturity and irresponsibility, it could not consist with justice or right reason to treat the first act of disobedience as at all of the nature of sin, or as deserving of any punishment properly so-called. Instead of being one of spiritual tuition and moral probation, that state was one of total incapacity for either. *Fifthly* : if not acting from "a motive of envy," as the tempter insinuated, it would seem hard to discover on what principle the Divine Being acted, or for what good purpose the whole arrangements of the garden were really determined.

8. Such are the consequences of the adoption of a grossly literal mode of interpretation. The principle followed is to all intents identical with that which has led so many to draw from the simple and sublime words of the great Teacher the monstrous doctrine of transubstantiation. We are not, indeed, required to deny that the two trees possessed any peculiar virtues. The narrative is perfectly silent with respect to their physical character. To maintain that any tree or any created object could possibly have, in itself or in its fruit, the power to secure immortality to any creature, is simply to contradict all reason, and to forget the absolute dependence of all creatures for exist-

ence and well-being on the will and the power of the great Creator. God might, indeed, have exercised His own sustaining energy, in the renewal of strength or in the removal of disease, when the fruit of such a tree was used, or when its leaves were applied. To infer, however, or to imagine any special endowment, when the record is silent, or when the fitness of the tree for a most important moral and spiritual purpose may be easily perceived, seems very far from wise.

The trees appear decidedly to have been rather of mystic import than of miraculous virtue. We cannot for a moment doubt that they were wisely and benevolently planted by the Divine hand for highest and most needful instruction. The great Father would, doubtless, convey the first and most precious lessons to His new-created children. The great King would at once give a lesson of loyalty to Himself, and provide a befitting test of the loyalty thus required. The arts of civilized life were of course yet in the future. Books were yet unwritten. Human knowledge was yet ungathered. The first man could have no human teacher. In imparting the needful instructions to His children, the Divine Parent would use the best and most suitable means. He fitly addresses them in the simple and expressive language of symbol, as, in later times, He employed, for a like purpose, a vast variety of emblems, symbols, types, and as, to the present day, He uses the two standing symbolic ordinances of the Christian Church, baptism and the Lord's supper. He prepares two trees for His purpose, and employs them as the first books of express and authoritative revelation. The one may be called the Book or Symbol of Promise; the other, the Book or Symbol of Law. The former revealed or promised continued life, or immortality; the latter revealed moral obligation and duty, and demanded rightful and loyal obedience. So long as the man rendered such obedience, or acted according to the Divine will in relation to the tree symbolical of law, the tree of life, symbolical of promise, assured him of continued well-being.

The threatening of death as the penal result of disobedience was in keeping with the idea just expressed, that the tree of knowledge of good and evil symbolized law, or indicated Divine authority, on the one hand, and human duty or obligation on the other.

9. The names of these trees were to no small extent significant of all this and of very much more. Let us consider that of the latter—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. To trace such knowledge to the mere use of the fruit of this tree is to confound things which essentially differ—the material with the spiritual, the physical with the moral. Apart from the Divine prohibition and threatening, the name cannot be fully appreciated or the intended use of the tree really known. The prohibition revealed the authoritative will of God; the threatening expressed His disapprobation of all disobedience. Thus practically did God, through that tree, constantly declare that it was good for man to obey, that it was evil for man to disobey; that therefore there is a right and a wrong, a good and an evil, to which man must attend, and according to which he is bound to direct the whole course of his life. The preciousness of the promise associated with the tree of life, and the awfulness of the threatening connected with the tree of knowledge, would serve to set forth the more impressively the vastness of the difference between moral good and moral evil.

We must not for a moment suppose, however, that the sense of right and wrong, of good and evil, would be traceable exclusively to the lessons thus conveyed, by word and symbol, from without. If man had been endowed with no moral or spiritual nature, in vain would the most expressive words or symbols of moral or spiritual truth have been addressed to his ear or to his eye. Only because the external symbol corresponded with the internal sense was it possible for the former to awaken the latter. Had there been no Divine law written by the creative finger on the human mind, in vain would this

symbolic tree have been planted, and in vain would the Divine prohibition have been uttered. As a rational and moral being, man was capable of receiving the appropriate instruction, and doubtless actually received it. Thus did he acquire the knowledge of good and evil. As he pondered the Divine Will thus revealed, that knowledge would deepen and increase. As he continued to obey, it would still further deepen and increase, and would go on to do so, and that normally, as his moral and spiritual nature expanded, and to the promotion of his real and lasting good. When he yielded to temptation, and violated this positive law, the mystic tree became the source of a different kind of knowledge—that of the sad experience of the nature and results of present sin as contrasted with those of former innocence.

10. But, it may be asked, is this all? Does not God Himself expressly declare that, through the act of disobedience—nay, through the very use of the forbidden fruit—man became like Himself, “to know good and evil”; that, in fact, in some sense, or to some extent at least, the words of the tempter were really true? In proof of this, frequently, and that by men of highest standing and learning, chapter iii. 22 is appealed to. We cannot here treat fully of this important matter, and would simply say that we hope to show in due course that the words in question imply no such idea.

11. We have already said that the Divine design was twofold,—that of spiritual tuition, and that of moral probation. As the latter, in its results, has a close and permanent relation to the future procedure of God as disclosed throughout the sacred volume, we need not wonder to find that it occupies the more prominent place in the narrative, and that it has been so often treated as the only one. As a consequence, however genial the material atmosphere of this primitive abode may be believed to have been, its spiritual atmosphere is apt to be felt

to be ungenial and cold. Nay, the imperfect view which we have as yet given of the two central objects may seem to contribute to this result. We would go on to add, then, that we must take another and apparently different, though we think a perfectly consistent, view of their symbolic import. We must not, as we may have appeared to do, make the tree of life subordinate to the tree of knowledge, as if Adam were to be regarded, not as yet possessing the rights and privileges associated with the former, but as merely placed within the garden with an opportunity of acquiring these rights and privileges by acting according to the Divine will with respect to the latter. We have had occasion to refer to eternal life as the gifted right or privilege of all true Divine sonship.

This principle was doubtless embodied in the symbolic arrangements of the garden, of which the real centre, the real heart and soul, was assuredly the tree of life. Whilst, in the sense intended, it was, as we have said, the symbol of promise, in as true a sense it may be viewed as the symbol of actual rightful possession of all the Divinely gifted rights and privileges of the new-created children of God. It was a kind of Magna Charta of all these, framed by the Divine hand, and ever placed before their eyes. They could not see it without remembering Him. They could not think of its expressive name without obtaining some glimpse of His boundless goodness. It spread the sweet fragrance of His paternal affection through their happy abode, making them feel that it was as really His home as it was their own. The other tree was most precious and needful, yet, at least in the first instance, of a use subordinate to that of this. We have called it the symbol of law ; but law, human as well as Divine, is primarily made for the sake of persons, possessions, privileges, and not the contrary. The tree of knowledge did not reveal how Adam might achieve a right or title to eternal life. That was His birthright as a son of the Eternal Father. It simply revealed how that right or title might be justly and certainly retained

and enjoyed ; whilst, at the same time, it acted as a standing and faithful witness of how it might be forfeited and lost.

12. Further, it was fitted to be of vast practical service in unfolding and directing the rich Divine or spiritual life of man. The prohibition connected with it, based on the absolute and universal proprietary right to give or to withhold, brought out into full relief the real position and relationship of Creator and creature, setting forth the Supreme Dominion of the Former and the subordinate dominion of the latter, and, at the same time, by expressly withholding a part, the more significantly and assuredly conveying and sealing the grant of all the rest. In proportion as the prohibition was sacredly regarded, this Divine grant would appear no less real and secure than free and great. The one symbol would be seen to be the complement of the other, the symbol suggesting the seeming severity of law to be confirmatory of the symbol suggesting the real goodness of the gift of privilege and right.

But this is not all. The very submission of the human will to the Divine expressly required, if freely and fully rendered, could not fail to secure the richest spiritual good. By such submission a living link of real and conscious connection would be formed between will and Will, mind and Mind, heart and Heart, between the feeble dependent child and the Almighty and all-sustaining Parent, more precious than all the treasures of any external paradise, whether on earth or in heaven. Whilst that link lasted and waxed stronger and stronger, wherever the son was the Father would seem to be, wherever the former went the Latter would seem to go. Adam would walk "as seeing Him who is invisible ;" he would feel connected with the whole spiritual world, through connection with its true and living Centre. Mere belief will not secure such conscious union. A vital faith or trust will undoubtedly create it. Still, only the sincere and continued submission and obedience of the will of the creature to that of the Creator can

render it permanent or place it under a law of perpetual normal advancement. "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

13. Thus does this garden home, with its peculiar arrangements, appear to suit the entire complex nature of primitive man, to provide for the exercise and culture of every faculty and affection, and to prove that his highest spiritual tuition, and not merely his moral probation, was really and Divinely sought. The excellence of the Creator was sufficiently clearly indicated to form a just basis of obligation to love and obey Him. The true relation between Creator and creature, without the knowledge of which spiritual life can neither intelligently act nor be symmetrically unfolded, was set forth with perfect exactness, in the simple and easily comprehended language of appropriate symbol, and completely apart from all such abstract definition as must have been at this opening period of no available use.

The truth expressed in the first section with respect to the created image of God and to the declared dominion of man so thoroughly agrees with the truth symbolized in the second, as to afford strikingly confirmatory evidence of the essential unity and common origin of the two sections of which we have been already led to treat. The Divine prohibition, or law of paradise, as it is usually called, recognises the true place and functions of the human will in the economy of the moral world. Moral good and moral evil are not simply natural, far less are they in any sense accidental. They depend for their very existence on the possession and exercise of that most profoundly mysterious power to which we have just referred, the human will. Man, accordingly, is treated as a will-endowed being, and not merely as possessing or capable of acquiring a sense of moral right and wrong. Thus the correct as well as complete idea of a responsible being is fully implied in the detailed method of the Divine treatment, though not expressed in any direct or positive form. Thus

wisely treated in accordance with his whole nature, and therefore, as a son and servant of God, he is not left to pursue a course of mere general well-doing, but taught to regard the Will of God as the real rule of his life. He is not to be content with any mere material, nay, with any intellectual, social, or even moral existence, as that for which he was created. Having received from the great Creator a spiritual or Divine life, he is to shape his course in harmony with its nature, and thus to accept the Divine Will, in relation to his entire being and mode of action, as his sole and all-comprehensive Law, in so far as it may be known or revealed to him. In this way, as already pointed out, that precious union between himself and his God, the very glory and excellence of his being, could alone be formed, preserved, and constantly advanced.

In no other manner can we suppose the Divine Father directly to train His children for a place within the circle of His holy and immortal Family. In their tuition He could not possibly fail to provide for the culture of their highest nature or forget to attach their supreme affection to Himself. Here, accordingly, obedience to His Will is the chief and central aim. But why permit of temptation? Why should the object withheld have been so beautiful and apparently so desirable? Did this consist with the idea of benevolent training for some higher position? Let us not forget the nature of all true training, which seems ever to involve the application of the principle of a befitting antagonism. We are told that the sinless and perfect Son of God "learned obedience by the things which He suffered"; and, as Adam was not placed in a region or school of suffering, we may view him as so far at least taught obedience by the thing which was withheld. Let the parent in no way cross the will of the child, or let him command the child to act only in harmony with his own inclination or his own desires, and the very idea of obedience will be but faintly conveyed, whilst the spirit of obedience will receive but partial exercise. Once more, however, Why this terrible and solemnly pronounced

threatening of death? Can this form a part of benevolent Paternal instruction? Assuredly it can. It was the warning of love. It was most needful in itself. Without an expression of its fearful result, the true nature and demerit of sin cannot be justly presented to the mind. In every point, accordingly, does this picture of the dawn of human life consist with the idea, that needful instruction, and not probation alone, was the first and foremost design of God.

14. Still, the idea of probation has been very generally regarded as that chiefly, if not exclusively, suggested by the history. It is by no means inconsistent with the other. The Divine procedure may simply be viewed as having more than one aspect; that which relates more expressly to the subsequent treatment of man being the more clearly indicated on the one hand, and the more carefully studied on the other. That there should have been such a twofold design, instead of being unnatural or unlikely, is what, both from the character of the training just treated of and from what distinguishes the whole course of providence, we would be led to expect. Training of every such kind proceeds on the principle of preparing for a higher position or sphere of life, and therefore implies the idea of future success or failure, of future acceptance or rejection, in fact, of future reward or punishment, according as the implied advantages have been used or neglected. Thus is the idea of probation of necessity involved. So the same idea may be traced along the line of every human life in earth, the present determining the future, youth more or less affecting manhood, as manhood more or less affects old age. The law of paradise was certainly by no means harsh. The test of loyalty was far from severe. All seems worthy of the goodness and wisdom of God. All seems consistent with the nature and interests of primitive man.

15. Not a few, indeed, consider that, to suppose man to be thus put under law, with its implied sanctions, is to view him

as placed below his proper rank as a son of God. To occupy the position of a subject is deemed inconsistent with his true filial standing, as if son and subject were expressive of incompatible relationship to God, or as if Father and King indicated relations which the Divine Creator could not sustain towards the same beings at one and the same time. We deem this a very great, nay, a very wonderful, mistake. We cannot here fully deal with it. However, we may, on the contrary, affirm that the idea of subject must be added to that of son, if we would rise to the full conception of the true and most exalted nature and rank, whether of angel or of man. No rational being can be forever treated as a mere child, a sort of moral infant. He must rise to the highest capacity for moral government and responsible agency if he would rise to honour and glory. For the sake, then, of the real dignity and well-being of His Family, God must act as a King as well as a Father. The grand mystery of all moral nature, the wonderful endowment of will, which we may well regard as the greatest triumph of creative wisdom and power, suggests the idea, that, only by constituting beings such as men subjects as well as sons, could either the highest and most excellent form of created existence be produced, or the most wonderful and glorious manifestation of Creative Wisdom and Power be made. Instead, then, of treating subjection to moral law as inconsistent with the dignity of Divine sonship, we are to regard it as the peculiar glory of such sonship to possess a nature capable of moral government, and to pursue a course of conformity to Divine and therefore good and just and perfect Law. Never was what is treated as the sacredness of physical law so fervently and resolutely maintained within the scientific world as at the present day. Both Scripture and reason declare that the sacredness of Moral Law ought, if possible, to be held in still higher veneration. In placing himself voluntarily and cheerfully under the latter, every rational being raises himself. By placing himself above it, he casts away his crown. In a word, true Moral Law is but

the expression of the perfect Will of the Creator on the one side, and of the highest character and conduct of the creature on the other. The oft-quoted words of Hooker are by no means extravagant,—“Of law, there can be no less acknowledged, than that her seat is in the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world; all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power: both angels and men and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy.”

16. In passing from this branch of our subject, and before dealing with the difficult question of the declared consequence of transgression, it may be well to call attention to the following important points :—

(a.) We have already alluded to the fact, that the entire Divine procedure appears to presuppose, on the part of Adam, the possession of a moral and spiritual nature answering to the instructions symbolically or otherwise conveyed to his mind. The whole narrative, as well as Scripture generally, would lead us to conclude that that nature was, in every sense, full and complete. He was, in every part, a perfect human being. Whilst fully believing this, we need not go with very many to either extreme of supposing that it implied the possession of an intellectual greatness far transcending that of his most illustrious sons, or of holding that it really involved no very remarkable elevation above the highest of the inferior ranks around him. Here we think the golden mean true to primitive manhood, and therefore wisest and safest. We have just to believe that Adam came forth from the great Fountain of Life as perfectly fitted for his position and end, as we find the numerous creatures of pure instinct fitted for theirs. If they are capable of the most wonderful operations, and that without a single lesson from parents or others, we surely cannot err in

ascribing to the pure and perfect nature of primitive man all those faculties and susceptibilities which fitted him for the enlightened reception and use of every Divine communication, and in the free and unforced exercise and outgoing of which he would, as we have been already hinting, so embrace the Divine Will, in whatever way revealed, as to rise to all that oneness with God which is of the very nature and essence of spiritual and immortal life.

(*b.*) We are very far from being bound to believe that no other or further instructions were imparted than those implied or expressly alluded to in the narrative. We are rather bound to infer that, however barely hinted at or entirely passed over, all really needful communications were made; at least, that no knowledge was withheld really essential to the fairest method of probation. We have supposed Adam to have received, in the hours or days of solitary life, his first Divine instructions; but we need not conclude that no others were added, or that he was left without Divine aid, and at a future period to convey them to the mind of Eve. She, we may rather conclude, as well as he, would receive, whether through outward converse or by inward illumination, all that was necessary to prepare for the Divine life which they were designed to lead, and for the eventful contest in which they were to be engaged. From that obscurity then, which seems traceable to the brevity of the record and the peculiarity of the subject, together with the prepossessions of the reader, we must not infer any like or real obscurity in the actual communications of Him, Who could and doubtless did reveal His Will with befitting fulness and perspicuity. If we combine, then, the two ideas of personal endowment and of Divine tuition, and further, if we add that spiritual aid which all dependent creatures need, and in the strength of which they ought ever to act, we may, without extravagant notions of any really superhuman greatness, rise to a sufficiently clear conception of their preparedness for the responsibilities of life, and of the perfect possibility of their

being "more than conquerors" in the spiritual struggle, and therefore of the real guilt and ill-desert of their actual moral failure.

(c.) Whilst thus generally we infer sufficient instruction, we are not at liberty to decide, in any particular instance, as in that of the threatened penalty, how far such instruction must have extended. We need not say how difficult it now is, if it be not impossible, to determine the precise idea conveyed to Adam's mind, whether by the words ascribed to God, or in some unknown way more suitable to his mental condition. The view taken of the six creative days freely admits of ample time for observation as well as instruction ; so that the idea of natural death may have been early suggested by more than one instance of the touching reality. He might thus conclude that such was the penalty referred to. If more than this was intended, we may fairly suppose all needful explanation. At the same time we are by no means prepared to admit that, in order to equal and impartial moral trial, any one has a right to maintain that a full or exact knowledge of the penalty must have been possessed. The words referred to were not merely, as we have said, the warning of love ; they were also, as we are now considering them, the threatening of law. The manifold end for which that law was ordained is so far beyond our powers of full and steady apprehension as to make it utterly impossible to judge of the amount or the definiteness of the knowledge which it would consist with Divine wisdom to impart.

Thinking exclusively of the defined external act of transgression, we might naturally conclude that the more express and vivid the idea of the penal result the more powerful would be its influence for good. In this, however, we might very greatly err. If, for example, that idea, through its very definiteness and vividness, so absorbed the whole mind as to create an intense desire solely to escape the terrible evil, the mere outward act of disobedience might have been avoided,

yet only at the expense of developing such an amount of self-love as might have been easily transformed into selfishness, or have proved dangerously antagonistic to that pure supreme love of God which forms the essential principle of all spiritual life, and thus have led, only by a different path, to the same fearful goal of spiritual death ; or, we may suppose a different result : so vivid and powerful a thought of "the severity of God" might have so enfeebled that of His boundless "Goodness" as to prepare the mind to receive what it was of itself too easily led to accept, the malignant and fatal insinuation of the want of all real Paternal Affection.

If, then, we rather understand the threatening as somewhat general, and as expressive of a fearful and justly deserved retribution, though presented in the form of a no less awful because dimly apprehended death ; and if we suppose, as we have every right to do, that Adam had a vivid consciousness of that whole ocean of spiritual life which flowed within, and thus was led to regard the mysterious and terrible thing of which he was forewarned as by no means necessarily identical with the mere dissolution of his bodily frame,—we seem warranted to conclude that enough was done, or indeed that the wisest method was adopted, in the application of appropriate motive power, in order to the truly moral and not merely mechanical prevention of evil. If, after all, such motive power was resisted and the Divinely-forbidden act committed, however different the actual punishment from that which may have been anticipated, no reasonable complaint could have been preferred, provided only the infliction did not, as with such a Judge it could not, in the least exceed the just measure of ill-desert.

In his "Life in Christ," Mr. White has constructed, with great force and beauty, a seemingly conclusive argument to the contrary. He says, "There is a wide difference between a veiled promise and a veiled threatening. The former may be worthy of Divine wisdom and goodness ; the latter seems

irreconcilable with Divine justice. The blessing of Christ in the gospel might fitly be promised under the figurative expression, that 'the seed of the woman should crush the serpent's head'; but the curse of the law, which called for the intervention of mercy, should surely be expressed in all the length and breadth of its terribleness."

Strong as this undoubtedly is, we cannot regard it as decisively conclusive against the main principle above laid down. The "veiled threatening" may, morally, be more suitable and influential than the most clearly revealed, however terrible. What we have already said may suffice to prove as much. However, as the case of Adam was very peculiar, that of a real and designed probation, we might have said that a definitely expressed Law, with an indefinitely indicated Penalty, would seem to be most appropriate. For what was to be proved or brought to the test? Without doubt, true loyalty, including supreme love, towards God, of which we might of ourselves, perhaps, suppose some express announcement of the Divine Will to be the simplest and most befitting test. Such an awful representation of penal consequences as might possibly have secured full external obedience, might at the same time have entirely failed to fulfil the end in view. It might have revealed the strength of the love of self or of the fear of suffering which it was fitted to awaken, and have rendered the supposed obedience no real index of the depth or power of the principle to be tested. This, it may be argued, would imply that the threatening, as it stands on the record, would have been needless or out of place. No. Without it, and that expressed as God alone knew how to express it, possibly neither the designed lesson of the difference of moral good and evil could have been given, nor the true character of God, the sincere love of which was to be tried, could have been adequately revealed. Besides, probation was by no means the only design. As already suggested, the entire Divine purpose was so complex, as well as peculiar, that we cannot rise to a com-

plete and unbroken conception of it, and thus may well conclude that God may have accounted it wisest and best to convey to the mind of Adam no more than a general idea of the penalty, and to present to our minds, through the sacred record, no more than a like general idea of His judgment of the full and just desert of the First Transgression.

(*d.*) We have more than once alluded to eternal life as the infinitely precious birthright of every true son of God. This has been too often overlooked. The law of paradise, accordingly, has been regarded as promising immortality as the reward of obedience, and threatening death as the punishment of sin. We have endeavoured to set forth what we deem the true view of the case, that which we think is given throughout Scripture, and which appears symbolized by the mystic trees of the garden, the one tree indicating the actual possession of the free and unmerited Paternal gift, and the other showing, not how it might be obtained, but how it was to be retained and how it might be lost. Practically, it is of vast consequence to keep the grand, mighty principle thus implied fully and ever in view. If we would enjoy a strong, abiding faith in God for what, through the eternity of its continuance as well as the infinitude of its worth, we may, in our most thoughtful moments, sometimes find it very hard to maintain our faith, we must trace the blessing to the Eternal Father of our spirits, not indirectly through any work or excellence of our own, but directly to the measureless fullness of His unchanging love. "If children, then heirs, heirs of God," and therefore immortal, is not only a true saying, stamped with the authority of Scripture, but one of the simplest and broadest moral or spiritual axioms, the truth of which every well-constituted mind will behold with intuitive clearness and certainty. As it enables us to understand the case of newly-created and as yet sinless man, it also enables us to appreciate the perfect adaptation of the gospel of Christ to meet our own. In receiving Him we again become the true sons of God, and are thus restored to all the

rights and privileges of sonship, and therefore to that of eternal life. All is to be traced, in the one case, to infinite Goodness, and, in the other, to infinite Grace.

However, we do not say that the Divine sonship involves the undoubted possession of an essential, or inherent, or what some would call a natural immortality. We cannot treat fully of this matter. We cannot discuss the question of the destructibility or indestructibility of mind. If indestructible by any act or evil course of its own, or by any created power, it must at least be destructible by that Power to which it owes its existence, and on which it can never cease to depend. We refer to this as closely bearing upon recent discussions with respect to the final destiny of man. No one need either affirm or deny the natural immortality of the human soul or spirit, in order the more powerfully to defend or assail the ordinary doctrine of eternal punishment, as by way of defence such immortality can be demonstrated by neither science nor Scripture, and as in the way of assault it is simply unnecessary to disprove the impossibility of that existing for ever which God can, at the demand of justice, extinguish at any moment. Let us never forget that Moral Law is mightier than physical law; that the former, and not the latter, determines the destiny of every moral being—nay, of the universal creation. As Hooker says, that law has “its seat in the bosom of God”; that law guarantees the immortality of every true son of God. Let us look, not to any law of our own being, but to the law of Divine love, nay, we may say with mingled reverence and confidence, of Self-contracted Paternal obligation, written on the Uncreated Heart, and upheld by the Untiring Hand, if amid the changeful speculations of science and philosophy we would retain an unshaken assurance of a Divine and endless life. As the continued well-being of the infant child may be said to reside in the parental love and care rather than in its own feeble strength, so the immortal life of innocent man may be said to have resided in the loving heart and sustaining hand

of his Creator; and so, too, we are told, the eternal life of every Christian "is hid," not in any self-supporting power of his own being, but "with Christ in God."

At the same time, we cannot too carefully guard against every tendency to the opposite extreme of low and materialistic notions of our own complex nature. For the loftiest conceptions of that nature we have been indebted vastly more to Divine revelation than to human science or philosophy. It is, therefore, with pain that we ever notice in the writings of Christian men such interpretations, or rather misinterpretations, of Scripture as cannot fail to suggest to many minds conceptions of the nature of man almost identical with those of that of irrational creatures. So far as the bodily frame is concerned, we certainly need ascribe no original immortality to it. If man had retained his perfect uprightness, the creative and sustaining Power was ever at hand to renew or to change, and without the permission of death, as in the case of the resurrection body of Christ, to transform it, if so it pleased, into what Paul calls a spiritual body, fitted, as he says "flesh and blood" cannot be, for the everlasting kingdom of God.

17. "In the day thou eatest of it thou shalt surely die"—or "dying thou shalt die." Let us now inquire more particularly into the force of these words. Very different ideas have been attached to them.

(a.) That of natural death. If, however, we regard this death as consisting simply of the separation of soul and body, the latter dissolving through the agency of the chemical laws, and the former really though mysteriously retaining its conscious and active existence, then it cannot possibly have included the whole penal result; as, after its infliction there would have remained an unknown amount of misery due to the continued consciousness of guilt, of separation from God, and of the other consequences of sin. At most, then, natural death could have been only a part of the threatened penalty. Further, the

same conclusion must be drawn from the fact, that if that death had alone been intended as it was in the end actually endured, the penalty attached to the law of paradise, could not be said to have been in any real sense averted by the interposition of mercy or by the introduction of the Redemptive economy.

(b.) The next idea to which we would refer, and which has of late been stoutly maintained, is that of the extinction of all conscious being. Such an evil, though even painlessly inflicted, could not be accounted small. It would assuredly have been immense. As the Divinely gifted life with all its precious rights and privileges was eternal, it would have involved an eternal loss, and this would have been to all intents an eternal punishment. On the one hand, without express revelation it could not well be deemed insufficient, whilst on the other, it could not be regarded as unduly severe, as no principle can be more equal than that of the forfeiture of any Divine gift, even life itself, which the recipient instead of gratefully using for its proper end is pleased selfishly to employ for a purpose contrary at once to the Will and to the Honour of the Bountiful Giver. Still, objections might be adduced, which very many would hold to be decisive. We shall not refer to them; we would only add, that Scripture authority is wanting, and, in such a case, it is never safe for us to judge of the measure of ill-desert.

(c.) We need hardly say, that the more orthodox view involves an idea of tremendously, nay, we may say infinitely more awful character, even that of a whole eternity of positive suffering. The death thus supposed is threefold,—spiritual, natural, eternal. If we hold the doctrine of the essential immortality of the soul, that is to say, that however sinfully and contrary to the laws of its own nature it may act, and without some directly destructive act of God, it must live on for ever; and if at the same time, we conceive the words in question to imply that the transgressors would be left to endure the entire

natural consequences of their act,—then we must of necessity accept this view as certainly correct. All must admit that spiritual death would be the immediate result. If the Divine or spiritual life implies, as we have already seen, the loving union of the human will with the Divine, the very purpose to commit the forbidden act involved, as far as it went, a withdrawal of will from Will, of heart from Heart, of spirit from Spirit, a rending, if not a rupture, of the living bond, whilst the actual commission of it consummated the spiritually suicidal work, and so issued in immediate spiritual death.

Further, the fearful injury thus done to the higher nature could not fail to introduce an element of physical weakness and decay, and to sow the seeds of bodily suffering, disease, and death. But we cannot stop here. As no mercy is supposed to intervene, this natural death must be followed with all such misery as we have already traced to the continued consciousness of sin and its results; and finally, as, according to supposition, the soul would have lived for ever, this misery, this living death, must have been eternal. However, it will be observed that in all this two things have been assumed, namely, that the soul is in its very nature imperishable or destructible by nothing short of a direct act of almighty power, and that God would not have in any way interfered either for its deliverance or for its extinction.

We would say, however, as we have said before, that the assumed essential immortality of the soul has never been, and, we believe, never can be demonstrated. We would also repeat that even supposing it demonstrable, if such eternal suffering were beyond all just desert the Divine Power could not fail to interpose for its extinction. In this case the penalty would have resembled that which not a few actually hold to be the real punishment of the finally impenitent, namely, that of a period of positive suffering terminating in the eternal loss of all conscious existence. We do not propose to treat fully of this view of the subject; we would simply observe, that the

only standard of final appeal is here wanting ; we refer to that of express Scripture testimony.

It may, indeed, be replied that the New Testament is not silent with respect to the destiny of the wicked. Still, let the guilt of Adam have been greater or less than that of his impenitent posterity, we at least are incompetent to judge, and have certainly no sufficient ground on which to conclude, that, high as undoubtedly was his responsibility in virtue of the untainted uprightness of his original character, his one act of transgression, committed in inexperience on the one hand, and under strong temptation on the other, was worthy of as severe a punishment as that of a whole life of sin committed against the light of Divine mercy or in the persistent rejection of eternal salvation. We seem to have far safer ground on which to conclude, that neither on the authority of Scripture, nor on that of our own moral judgment, can we determine what the real penalty in question was, or form any definite conception of what it ought to have been. Hence,

(d.) We are brought to what we must deem the wisest and safest of all conclusions with respect to this important matter, that, whatever the character of any unrecorded communications to primitive man, the Divine Author of Scripture has been pleased to convey to us no defined judgment of the full and just desert of the first transgression.

18. It now remains for us only to refer to the expression, "in the day," which some regard as here used with emphasis. We need not say that the entire threatening, especially this clause, has been often treated as inconsistent with the subsequent Divine procedure. However, it seems thoroughly hypercritical to put so much weight in such a case on a mere turn of expression. As elsewhere, the noun with the prefix may be simply viewed as used adverbially for "when." In this very chapter, it is used of a period inclusive of more than one of the indefinitely long creative days. But even if here

taken literally of the very day of transgression, it would involve nothing inconsistent with fact. For, in the *first* place, God here speaks simply in the character of a Lawgiver. He lays down the law of paradise. He points solely to the legal results of disobedience. In so doing He could not be expected to add, "unless mercy prevent," or the like. So it is with laws of every kind. The penalty is simply annexed. This does not interfere with the action of a still higher law, the law of royal prerogative. However express the terms of any law, and however little room may seem left for the exercise of mercy, we never complain of the untruthfulness of the statute-book when that prerogative is exercised in the commutation of a sentence or in the pardon of a crime. We may add, in the *second* place, and in keeping with this, that there is an essential and recognised difference between the obligation to fulfil a promise and the obligation to execute a threatening. A promise cannot be justly or honourably broken. A threatening may be honourably and graciously withdrawn. Hence, in the *last* place, we have here the grandest instance of the exercise of prerogative, by which the Divine Law was more highly honoured by the introduction of the Economy of Redemption, than it possibly could have been by the literal infliction of the justly merited penalty.

VII.

"And Jehovah God said, (It is) not good that the man should be alone ; I will make him a help meet for him. And Jehovah God formed out of the ground every beast of the field, and every fowl of the heaven ; and bought (them) to the man to see what he would call them ; and whatsoever the man called every living creature, that (was) its name. And the man gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the heaven, and to every beast of the field ; but for the man he found not a help meet for himself.

"And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept : and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in the place of it ; and Jehovah God formed the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman, and brought her to the man. And the man said, This now

(is) bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh : she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.

“ Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife : and they shall be one flesh.

“ And they were both naked, the man and his wife ; and they were not ashamed.”

1. The sacred writer had represented Adam, and therefore man, in the light of a rational and responsible being, as well as in that of a being possessing a Divine or religious nature. He had pointed to his relation to God as his Father-King; and set forth the peculiar economy of law and government under which he was placed. He now goes on to indicate the social nature of man. Jehovah God is represented as saying, that he had not been created or fitted for solitary existence, or even for exclusive communion with Himself. In the first section, it had simply been said, that man had been created “ male and female,” and that alike in the image of God, and therefore in the highest sense, on a perfect level of Divine dignity and worth. In the interpretation of this passage this should be kept in view, else the inferiority of woman or her absolute subordination to man might seem to be implied. The two statements are far from inconsistent. They set forth the whole truth in the most delicate and appropriate manner,—the Divine and equal dignity of the sexes on the one hand, and the relation of the wife to the husband, involving a certain degree of subordination, on the other. However, the main idea expressed is that of the social nature of man and of those wants which it creates, and which make him dependent on his fellows for the real and full enjoyment of life. Hence the Divine words,—“ It is not good that the man should be alone ; I will make a help meet for him,”—a fit companion, a true helper, one of like nature and sympathy, a kind of other self, a real counterpart.

More is meant than mere sex and social rank ; reference is made to the highest attributes of mind and heart, in fact, to all that mental, moral, and spiritual capacity, which is implied in the Divine likeness, and which raises man immeasurably above

the inferior creatures. This is clearly indicated by the immediate allusion to them. Having no such capacity, they presented no fitness for the desired companionship. Between him and them an impassable gulf would at once be seen. The sense of solitariness would thus be only deepened. Nothing short of a truly kindred spirit could possibly satisfy. No merely intellectual faculties, nay, no simply moral susceptibilities, could suffice. The Divine life constituted the main element of primitive manhood ; so that, only by the creation of a being alike highly distinguished, could the proposed "help meet" be Divinely provided, or the richest and most lasting social happiness be enjoyed. Thus, according to the Divine idea of humanity, living religion must unite with mutual affection in forming the sacred bond of true conjugal union, and cannot be wanting, if a foundation would be laid, whether for the more refined enjoyments of friendship, or for the more solid and enduring welfare of society.

2. "And Jehovah God formed out of the ground every beast of the field, and every fowl of the heaven ; and brought them to the man," etc. We need not here treat at large of the question of the alleged inconsistency between this statement and the account of the production of the animal kingdom contained in the first section. We have already dealt fully with it, when treating separately of the more general question of the unity of the two sections. Here, it is maintained, the lower creatures are represented as introduced after the formation of man, whereas they were previously described as formed before him. In this place, however, the intention was not to indicate the time or manner of their introduction, but simply, according to the author's peculiar style, to prepare the way for the statement with respect to their being, for the purpose of inspection and nomination, brought into the presence of the man.

In the immediate context we found an illustration of what we thus mean. We may here do no more than merely allude

to it. In verse 8 it is said, "And Jehovah God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed." Again in verse 15 it is added, "And Jehovah God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." It has been argued that here we have a reference to a second and really different act of God, that in the former case, He simply "put him" into the garden, and that in this He did more, He "caused him to abide" in it, as the form of the Hebrew verb may be held to imply. We accept this as intended. The idea of the special purpose is also added. However, as, in the second case, God is expressly spoken of as taking him, and therefore as conducting him to the garden, the reference is evidently to one and the same Divine act, and is thus repeated, not by way of marking any point of order, but simply to prepare the way for the further statement about to be made. So here, the sacred writer says that God formed the lower animals, not that he might record a new fact, but simply that he might add what immediately follows with regard to them. It has been well remarked by Kiel, that "the arrangement" of the clauses, "may be explained on the supposition that the writer, who was about to describe the relation of man to the beasts, went back to their creation, in the simple method of the early Semitic historians, and placed this first instead of making it subordinate; so that our modern style of expressing the same thought would be simply thus: God brought to Adam the beasts which he had formed." When all may be accounted for on so simple and natural a principle, to maintain that a writer of such a character, with the first section before his eyes, whether composed by him or not, could have possibly committed a blunder of such dimensions as that alleged, seems, to say the least, to overstep the bounds of reasonable argument.

3. "And brought (them) to Adam." We need by no means press this statement to the utmost limits of its seeming import, as if the sacred author intended to say that animals of all kinds

and from all countries, constrained by Divine impulse, came to the one spot on earth where they could be intelligently surveyed and receive their countless appropriate names. It has been well observed that the "them" of our English version has no Hebrew equivalent ; so that we are left to fill up the blank as correct interpretation may suggest. Suppose we read thus, "And brought (of them) to Adam," a simple and suitable meaning will at once occur. We may thus regard such creatures as stood in more direct relation to him, whether locally or economically, as chiefly, if not exclusively intended.

4. Nor need we suppose that the words here used of the act of God are to be taken in the most literal sense, as if all were miraculous, or as if Adam were simultaneously surrounded with one vast assemblage of all sorts of living beings. By supposing that Adam and Eve were created on one and the same ordinary day, and that the fact here alluded to intervened, many have involved themselves in needless difficulty and this part of the record in most unreal obscurity. Correct views of the creative days leave us, with the most ample time, perfectly free to regard the work here assigned to Adam as that of any number of days or weeks which it may appear most likely to have required. Throughout Scripture, God is spoken of as doing what He causes, however indirectly, to be done. Whilst we need not suppose Eden to have been infested with the fiercer tribes, we may admit that all sorts, wild as well as tame, may have been caused to come within the sight of primitive man. We would be regarded as neither affirming nor denying the intervention of supernatural power. As a lesson of superiority and of dominion was undoubtedly to be conveyed to his mind, for aught we can know, all may have yielded to such an influence as afterwards led so many creatures to the ark of Noah, or as at a still later date restrained the lions amongst which the saintly Daniel was unjustly cast ; so that they may, for the time at least, have been obedient to his word. At the same time we

are not bound to any special view of the history. It is here susceptible of free interpretation. It is wise to bind no needless burden upon it, but to allow it to appear what, in this respect, it really is.

5. "And brought (them) to the man to see what he would call them : and whatsoever the man called every living creature, that (was) its name. And the man gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the heaven, and to every beast of the field." On these words we may remark as follows :—

(a.) The Divine purpose here alluded to appears to favour the idea of a special impulse. God would lead Adam to act the part of the visible head of the world, under Him on the one hand, and over it on the other ; and thus, if we may so say, as His own vicegerent, a kind of feudal lord of the earth. The faculty of speech, by which he was so remarkably distinguished from all other creatures, and without which even the noblest of his powers could never have been adequately unfolded, was to be peculiarly exercised and strikingly manifested. He was to give names to the beings around him. These names, however, were not to be mere artificial sounds ; they were in some way, and to a greater or less extent, to be expressive of what, to his observing and discriminating eye, appeared distinctive of the various kinds or classes presented to his view. There was thus implied the exercise and manifestation of the faculty or faculties of observation, discrimination, generalisation, and classification. As already indicated, we are not prepared to regard primitive man as so wonderfully endowed with intuitional power as many have supposed ; and therefore we would not represent the names here alluded to as expressive of so great an amount of intuitional knowledge, or even of external observation, as has been frequently imagined. Let us not, either in inference or in imagination, over-step the real warrant of Scripture. It is sufficient for us to perceive, in the powers of thought and of speech undoubtedly revealed, together with

what we have already had reason to conclude as to other powers and qualities, an index of that Divinely created fitness for his ruling position, which forms the natural and appropriate basis of the Divinely gifted and Divinely recognised authority to act as the rightful proprietor and governor of the whole world, animate and inanimate, which we find here beautifully illustrated by this early and simple work of nomination, and which is expressly affirmed and sublimely illustrated in many parts of Scripture.

(b.) It may, perhaps, be argued, that the words here used convey the idea of absolute universality, and thus of a vastly larger gathering than we have supposed, "Whatsoever the man called *every* living creature," "the man gave names to *all* cattle, and to *every* beast of the field." However, such expressions are constantly employed in an indefinite sense. The universality intended is relative. Here it relates to the animals brought to Adam, and not to the whole animal kingdom. But we have already shown that we are without proof of more than a mere part having been thus brought. We need not allude to what we cannot but regard as the gross absurdity of supposing multitudes being led from the remotest regions for the purpose of receiving names, and returning to their unknown habitations, where they would never more be seen or named by any human being. The names actually given were designed for practical use. We are expressly told that they continued to be employed. This seems implied in the words, "Whatsoever the man called every living creature, that (was) its name." But, if thus the practical end or the perpetual use was kept in view, we may conclude with almost infallible certainty, that only a limited number received their befitting names, and that these stood in local relationship to the man.

(c.) When we also keep in view the fact, that we have no evidence as to the length of time intervening between the creation of Adam and that of Eve, and that therefore it may have been vastly greater than it appears to be usually con-

ceived, we are enabled to consider the immensely important question of the origin of human language, closely connected as it is with this subject, in a far more free and satisfactory manner than it can otherwise be considered. Abundant scope is thus given for all the processes of exact observation and needful reflection. Without at all wishing to set aside or to limit the supernatural element, we are enabled to see a wider field opening up for the more natural play of the faculties of the first man, and for his earnest and persevering use of them in carrying on from first to last the special and suitable work here said to have been assigned him. He will thus appear involved in no undue haste or hurry. Day after day, evening after evening, he may be supposed to go forth to behold the wonderful works of God, to observe new objects or classes of objects, to trace so many beautiful resemblances, or to mark not a few striking differences, to admire the rich variety characteristic of the endless forms of vegetable and animal life, or to meditate on all the treasures of knowledge thus gathered without effort, yet retained and employed with equal carefulness and delight. Novelty would lend a charm to every scene, nay, to every object of sight. Amidst the profusion of nature, his mind may have felt again and again amazed, overwhelmed and lost. Discrimination would come to his help, individual objects would separate themselves into classes. As certain features or peculiarities struck his mind, the tendency to mark them off by the use of sounds, the impulse to use the faculty of speech would spontaneously come into play, and the work here appointed would be begun.

That work may have proceeded from stage to stage, far more slowly than many are accustomed to think ; and it may never have reached such a degree of completeness as some would perhaps deem it irreverent to doubt. If Scripture spoke with clearness and certainty, let us at once believe that the language of Eden was, from the first, both rich and perfect ; and then let us infer some such gift of Divine inspiration as was

long after granted to the apostolic founders of the kingdom of Christ. But, if the sacred narrative gives no account of so complete and marvellous a Divine creation, let us not incautiously add some grand, but unreal creation of our own, lest we be found in the end to have only marred the work of God, or to have vainly added to the citadel of Scripture a bastion or redoubt which neither we nor any others could possibly defend. Let us be content to hold that, however simple and elementary, the language of paradise sufficed for the wants and the enjoyments of its inhabitants, and that, whether a natural efflux of the newly constituted and richly endowed mind of man, or a direct and mysterious inspiration of God, or a slowly and continuously blended combination of both, the brief history here given leaves us without a single error to acknowledge, and with no theory, simple or complex, of the nature and origin of language to maintain.

It may, indeed, be urged, that we have recorded examples of the use of words, which imply a rich and spontaneous flow from the very first, or at least before any merely natural progress could have been made. As we do not regard the words of verse 24 as those of Adam, we cannot refer to them as an example. We find one, however, in the verse before,—“And Adam said, This now (is) bone of my bone, and flesh,” etc. We admit that, if such words were actually used at so very early a period, they suggest a very cogent proof of what can, only, we think, be fairly traced to a higher origin than the native powers of the human mind, however highly it may be supposed to have been endowed, even to the direct and full inspiration of God. However, we seem very far from being required to believe that Adam literally uttered these words. All that can be fairly inferred from this statement is, that the thought which joyously and exultantly arose in Adam’s mind, when he saw what he could not find among all the tribes of earth, a being answering to the secret, but unspoken, longing of his heart, one truly kindred to himself, either clothed itself in the expression

here given, or, if expressed in intelligible form, might have been so clothed. Than such an alternative the words can of necessity determine no more. Again and again does the sacred writer represent God as speaking, when certainly all that can be possibly inferred is simply such an alternative, namely, either that He used the words ascribed to Him, or that, if His thought or purpose were expressed in human language, such words might have been employed. We need not say that the latter must have been intended. The very same may thus have also been intended in the case of Adam.

We think, then, that we are constrained by the example in question to draw no positive inference as to the richness or poverty of the primitive vocabulary, or with respect to the Divine or human origin of earliest speech. Thus are we brought back to our former conclusion, that we are left free to judge of the entire subject as may appear, from the circumstances and the nature of the case, to our own minds most consistent with truth. If we may, without dogmatism, express what seems most naturally suggested, we would say, that man was originally most richly endowed with the precious faculty of speech, that the accompanying instinct at once and freely to use it must have been fully awakened by his peculiar state and circumstances, that Divine inspiration was not wanting in relation to the first acquisition of language, any more than it was with respect to the first lessons of a moral and spiritual nature, and that yet no higher human ability and no greater amount of Divine aid need be supposed than may have been absolutely necessary for the creation of a needful medium of intercommunion, and not of a language at once verbally and organically complete.

(*d.*) At this point, it may not be amiss to add a few remarks on a kindred subject, of not a little importance, though perhaps rarely made a matter of much careful reflection,—we allude to that of the really first or original language of man. “The etymologies,” says Wordsworth, “which are presented to us in

Genesis have been supposed to show that Hebrew was the original language. We have here Adam, from *adamah*," etc. In this way, the idea thus expressed is sometimes hinted at, without further reflection or without indication of its bearing upon a just Scripture interpretation. That the Hebrew can claim so remote an antiquity or so exalted a place as that of being the mother of all languages, will not be for a moment admitted by very many. Nor can we regard the proof suggested as at all cogent. We shall, then, suppose that the Hebrew and certain other dialects are of later origin; that they are to be connected with some common antecedent language; and that this or some other which has failed to leave any trace of its existence may have been that of the first generations of men. The correctness of this is of minor importance, so far as the point of right interpretation is concerned. We make the supposition as involving every real difficulty, and as thus implying that if the interests of historical interpretation are thus not sensibly affected, we may treat the sacred narrative as having all the simplicity and authority which it would have had if written in the very words of primitive man.

We shall have exhausted all needful consideration of this subject if we satisfactorily deal with three things: *First*, the use of certain proper names; *secondly*, the derivation of the Hebrew term for woman; and *thirdly*, the use of the sacred name Jehovah by Eve, and at so early a date as the birth of Cain.

First. Proper names. We refer to Eden, Adam, Eve. What may be said of these will apply to others in subsequent portions of the narrative. Now, it will be observed that they are all significant, and therefore may pass from language to language. Thus "Eden," like the kindred Greek, *ἡδονή* (*hedone*), indicates the delightsomeness referred to, and on the supposition of an earlier language, would simply be a term of equivalent meaning. So Adam, from *adamah*, the ground, would be a like equivalent on the like supposition, just as we

have the Latin *homo*, man, from *humus*, the ground ; so that, if the Latin had been the language of the Old Testament, the first man would have been significantly called *Homo*, which again would have been exactly equivalent to Adam. The case of the name of the first woman, Eve, or Havvah, is still more simple. It is simply the Hebrew for *life*, and might be fitly translated as in the Septuagint, *ζωή* (*Zoe*), and not merely transferred,—“And Adam called his wife’s name *Life*, because she was the mother of all *living*,” the maternal source of all human *life*. Thus, whatever the first dialect, it would supply three names of the same import as those of the sacred narrative. The first chapter contains a succession of illustrations. Thus, to take the first in order, “And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night,” to which no one would object on the ground that the terms day and night are English and not Hebrew. We may add a very simple illustration from the opening of the New Testament. We refer to the words of the angel to Joseph,—“Thou shalt call His name *Jesus*: for He shall save His people from their sins.” One acquainted with the English language alone might infer that this was the precise form of the name as then uttered. A Greek into whose hands the Gospel of Matthew fell might have inferred that it was used in the form in which it appeared to his eye. Neither might suspect that it was merely the altered form of a much older name, Jehoshua or Joshua. As this case implies no real difficulty, those above alluded to can involve none, whatever the significant names originally employed.

Secondly. The derivation of the Hebrew term for woman : “She shall be called Woman, *Isha*, because she was taken out of man, *Ish*.” Here we take the sacred writer to mean, that as expressive of the closest derivative relationship of man and woman, husband and wife, instead of being of different form and origin, the names of both are of like derivation, being simply the masculine and feminine forms of one and the same word. Thus the term woman, though not so directly, suggests

like close relationship ; so, as has been suggested, the obsolete form in the Latin, *vira*, a woman, from *vir*, a man.

Thirdly. The early use of the sacred name Jehovah. This is the most important of all the instances in question. In treating of the unity of the narrative, we have spoken of this name as known shortly after the first promise of redemption was Divinely announced. We also treated it as specially selected in connection with that promised work. This might appear to imply the primitive use of the very word, and therefore of the Hebrew tongue. However, the same principle obtains here as in the other instances. The name is significant ; and, on the supposition of a different language, we have simply to suppose a different word of precisely the same import.

6. "But for the man he found not an helpmeet for himself." This does not imply that he was literally or consciously seeking for such, nor does it imply any unduly formal arrangement with respect to the advent of the woman. It simply suggests that God brought it to pass that Adam should be prepared the more highly to appreciate the gift about to be conferred.

7. "And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept : and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in the place of it ; and Jehovah God formed the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman." This statement has been regarded as very greatly favouring the hypothesis that the whole was intended to be taken in an allegorical sense. We are viewing it historically ; and in doing so would, in the first instance, make the following observations on what seems to be the natural import of the words :—

(*a.*) The deep sleep here spoken of has been very differently regarded,—on the one hand, as purely natural and preventive of physical pain, and on the other as of a peculiar nature, and connected with a certain amount of Divine revelation. We may not be able to decide with authoritative certainty, but we

think the latter was intended. The word here rendered "a deep sleep," though not necessarily, is at least sometimes used in connection with express reference to Divine communication. In Job iv. 13 we find it said, in keeping with this, "In thoughts from the visions of the night, when *deep sleep falleth* upon men." Be this as it may, we have a clear case in point in this book. When about to give to the mind of Abraham a revelation of the future, God is said to have done precisely as to Adam. Chapter xv. 12, 13: "And when the sun was going down, *a deep sleep* fell upon Abram; and lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs," etc. Thus is the expression here used at least favourable to the view preferred. Besides, Adam shows that he knew concerning Eve's origin exactly what the supposed vision or ecstasy would involve. Nor does there seem to be any reason for so remarkable a Divine act, unless it was fully known to Adam; whilst, unless thus, the narrative suggests no Divine intimation with respect to it. We cannot, then, far err in assuming that, whilst his senses were thus perfectly sealed, his mind was made fully acquainted with both the nature and the design of the Divine act.

(b.) When we read, "And He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in the place of it," we must not allow our minds to take too literal, or at least mechanical, a view of this act. Doubtless it was infinitely more easy for the Divine Being to do what is here alluded to than it is for man either to form a correct conception or to give an adequate description of it. We may suppose Adam made, in ecstatic vision, to feel as if he saw the opening and closing of the side, with the removal of the part, and as if he were led to anticipate a very important result; so that when the actual result was presented to his view, the whole truth was instantaneously revealed.

(c.) But why not create the woman, like the man, directly, and without the intervention of any such partial medium?

We cannot at all believe that, of itself, a rib or any other part thus taken from the body of Adam was of the slightest physical consequence. Far less can we imagine, with some who seem to have given reins to their imagination, and to have treated Adam as a vastly different being before and after this act of God, that more was done than the words are fitted most naturally to suggest. That act we view as purely symbolical, and as intended to convey instruction to the first of the race, and to all in like manner united, with respect to the closeness and most sacred character of the conjugal relationship. The unity of husband and wife—nay, the unity of the entire race—was thus vividly expressed. It was alike easy for creative Power to do as here indicated, or to act independently, as in the case of Adam. If any good purpose could be served, personal or social, moral or religious, rather in the one way than in the other, then we must naturally conclude that God would choose to act accordingly, just as He was pleased to reveal His mind to Abraham and to many others in after times. We may thus infer that a double purpose was actually fulfilled,—that of securing the deeper affection and richer happiness of the parents of mankind, and that of presenting a symbol of the unity of husband and wife, and of the consequent unity of the family circle—nay of the unity of the human race—to the minds of those immediately interested and of those of every age and country. To this symbolized unity Paul appears to refer as of mystic nature, or rather as a type or shadow of the “great mystery” of “Christ and the Church.”

(d.) “Jehovah God formed the rib,” or “built the rib into a woman.” To all intents the creative work here alluded to would fully correspond to that described in the case of Adam. The female frame would be formed of the same material elements. Like inspiration would impart like understanding. When this work was finished, the Divine counsel and work of the first section would be realized,—“Let Us make Man in Our image, after Our likeness. . . . So God created man

in His own image, in the image of God created He him; Male and Female created He them." How finely, we may add, is the unity, affirmed and symbolized in the second section, thus in these words expressed! Instead of discordance, we may well say that we have a striking illustration of real harmony.

8. We have elsewhere more than once affirmed that, in so far as mere mode of expression is concerned, the references made to the creation of the man—nay, the above general allusion to that of the woman—might be interpreted consistently with the idea of what may be termed mediate creation, or in keeping with at least the leading idea of modern thought. We, at the same time, regard the whole spirit of the narrative as but little consistent with that idea; and must now add that, taking the record historically, and not allegorically, we cannot see how it is possible to understand it of anything short of a direct creative work, at least in the case of Eve; and if expressly in her case, then, we cannot but believe inferentially in that of Adam. Accordingly, it may be well to make the following remarks with regard to this important point:—

(a.) This Scripture history would in this way appear directly hostile to the current theory of the "descent of man." The general theory of evolution might be accounted true and sufficiently well established, but could not be consistently applied to the development or creation of man. Of course we speak of Scripture as above interpreted. We do not speak with the authority of an infallible interpreter. Those who have accepted the theory referred to in its universal application must be left to present the nature and import of this narrative in some different light. Must we admit any real discordance between verified science and the view given above? Assuredly not.

In the *first* place, we are not prepared to accept the theory referred to. Even evolutionists themselves are not at one with respect to its application to mankind. The gulf between them and every other species is so wide, and apparently so im-

passable, that, in order to the introduction of the former, causes or forces must be supposed to have been at work, whose presence can be detected in no known operation of nature. Nay, one of very high authority, Mr. Wallace, to borrow from "The Unseen Universe," p. 178, "sees in the production of man the intervention of an external will. He remarks that the lowest types of savages are in possession of a brain, and of capacities far beyond any use to which they could apply them in their present condition, and that therefore they could not have been evolved from the mere necessities of their environments."

However, in the *second* place, even though the general theory were demonstrated, and though a very great amount of evidence could be adduced in favour of its application to man, no more could be inferred with absolute certainty than the possibility or probability, let us say the greatest probability, of his being evolved through the agency of natural causes; so that, to every one who has thoroughly yielded to the evidences and fully accepted the testimony of Scripture, his case would appear purely exceptional, owing doubtless to his essential superiority on the one hand, and to his filial relationship to the universal Creator on the other; science uttering her last word in the assertion of no more than the highest probability, Scripture giving forth her one and only word, her "yea, yea," in her affirmation of simple positive fact. No inconsistency could thus be proved. Vastly different is the geological argument against the first section, when viewed as it usually is, as setting forth the natural order of development. The real order, demonstrated with infallible certainty, has merely to be clearly and correctly presented to view. We have endeavoured accordingly to show that the sacred author intended a totally different kind of order, and that thus his successive descriptions do not and cannot conflict with the inductions of geology. Here, however, we have no more than probability, be it ever so high, on the one side, and

expressly testified fact on the other. Apparently opposed they undoubtedly are ; really inconsistent they cannot be shown to be. Let the law of evolution be deemed and seemingly proved to be universal ; Scripture comes in, and in this case declares that there is at least one most important exception. When that exception is seriously considered, not only does the physical evidence—certain evolutionists being judges—go a great way in its support, but it is itself found to be of such a character as to be worthy of all the separation and exaltation which a direct and special act of creation may imply. We cannot fail to see the force of this, if we fully accept the Scripture idea of man as created in the Divine image, and designed for a blessed immortality. We may well conclude that, both within and beyond the scope of our minds, there may have existed in the Eternal Mind the most ample—nay, the most absolute—reasons for drawing, creatively as well as providentially, the clearest and broadest line of separation between the Divine family and the outside races of irresponsible and perishing beings.

We may here add, then, in the *third* place, that very much has yet to be done by science before any real or certain inconsistency can be demonstrated. We may indicate the following :—

1st. The general theory stands in need of full and satisfactory proof. This must remain the case so long as not one single instance of actual and undoubted specific evolution has been found, as has been admitted by men who are most highly competent to judge, and whose acceptance of the theory implies sufficient inclination to receive all available proof. We may add that, whilst the positive evidence is thus defective, the adverse negative evidence seems very strong. Between species and species, from the very nature of evolution, there must have been, in most cases at least, not a few intervening links. Now we have to ask, not, Where is the missing link ? but, Where are all these missing links ? It will not do to say

that the geological record is very defective, or that it is yet very imperfectly known. If the lost objects were few, or their absence easily accounted for, the matter would be different. But what shall we say of the absence of all those between every two allied species throughout the animal kingdom? Let only the number of intervening links be multiplied by the number of the species connected by them, and we think the product will appear so vast as to render the removal of all trace of their existence not only unaccountable but also incredible.

2nd. But, supposing the theory were supported by even numerous instances, this would by no means involve its universal and unexceptional application. Throughout the long progress from the lowest to the highest forms of life, there may have been countless reasons for Divine intervention, whether to modify the constitution of some existing race, or to introduce an entirely new species. When we contemplate the numerous lines of parallel progressive development, first through one and then through another long geologic era, all seemingly keeping equal time, and every living company fitted for its proper place and work, or every little army prepared and accoutred for its special warfare, we cannot well trace so inconceivably great and varied a result or series of results to the mere modifying power of external and ever changing circumstances. At every new stage we seem to see room for the interference of Almighty Wisdom, and to behold many a gap which could be filled only by the working of Infinite Skill. We cannot then conclude that, even though evolution were possible and real, it must be accounted universal.

3rd. We have already maintained that the highest probability of the natural descent of man might be proved, and that yet this could not be justly regarded as expressly contradicting full Scripture testimony as to his direct or immediate creation. Before real inconsistency could be demonstrated, the fact and not the mere probability of natural development must be proved. This, then, remains to be done.

4th. It may be said that the historical interpretation of Scripture cannot be made to consist with more recent discoveries and deductions with respect to the antiquity of man. Here two remarks may be made : *first*, that we must yet wait for fully satisfactory and final proof with regard to this matter ; and, *secondly*, that even though a race resembling the present could be proved to have existed long before the Scripture era of primitive man, it would yet require to be demonstrated that the present race descended from it. The fact that it consists with the purposes of Providence to admit of the existence of human beings so degraded in condition and circumstances as hardly to be accounted responsible for their actions, would seem to make it appear by no means inconsistent with the like purposes to have introduced a like barely rational or responsible race, destined to pass away before the advent of man.

Hence, 5th, it would be needful not only to prove the existence of some ancient race, but also to trace the present back to it. This done, then we acknowledge this narrative, literally interpreted, could not be regarded as really consistent with verified science. We have thus endeavoured to show how much remains to be proved before any such discordance as that in question could be demonstrated.

We may here close by adding, 6th, that were even all the discordance which many maintain fully evinced, there would yet remain to be considered the final question of how far this narrative might be—as not a few propose—otherwise fairly interpreted, or of how far the truth of New Testament Christianity depends upon that of Old Testament history. So much for the main point under consideration, viz., the consistency of Scripture and science as to the direct creation of man.

(*b.*) But, what of the details here given of the Divine procedure ? Can we suppose the infinite God, the Creator and Up-holder of the universe, to have, as a matter of historical fact, acted in keeping with them ? We ought not, certainly, to take them too literally. No human words can adequately represent

the acts of God. Let us be satisfied to regard those employed as expressive rather of results than of modes of Divine operation. Thus we shall have to deal with the simple question of the possibility or probability of God acting as He is here declared. In the judgment of not a few eminent men, accustomed to breathe the spirit of more recent science, the idea of such contact between Creator and creature is to be viewed with more than suspicion. To such the details in question cannot but appear absolutely incredible. It must be confessed, that the tendency of science, even when free from error, is, by giving the grandest and most overwhelming views of the universe, to make it very far from easy to believe many of the statements of Scripture, however true to fact, revealing in the most amazing forms, as they do, the boundless condescension and love of the Great Creator. Of this Infinite Being, science awakens mainly one conception, that of His Greatness and Glory; and Scripture mainly another, that of His Goodness and Grace. If we place ourselves entirely under the sway of the former, we shall form no more than what we may call a half-conception of His Character. If we put ourselves as exclusively under that of the latter, we shall fail to rise above a like imperfect, a like half-conception. If we would possess a true and full conception of the loving and condescending as well as "the high and lofty One," we must habitually walk in the light and breathe the atmosphere of both.

Firstly. The Fatherhood of God is to be remembered. If to create for Himself a Divine and immortal family was not unworthy of His infinite greatness, to attend to the meanest wants of His children, and that with all tenderness and care, was assuredly worthy of Himself, and nothing else than the natural and necessary exercise of His Fatherly love. At the period here referred to man was literally in his infancy, his speechless childhood; and we need not be unbelieving if we read of the Divine impartation of the first and most important of all lessons, or if we seem obliged to infer that direct Divine aid was

not withheld when the earliest forms of speech were acquired. Nay, as the moral and spiritual,—we might say, the personal and social also,—are in themselves really higher than the purely physical, and as they are so represented in Scripture, we need not wonder to find natural objects and physical operations made use of, symbolically or otherwise, to secure the higher instruction and richer enjoyment of primitive man.

Secondly. It is utterly vain to attempt to exclude the miraculous or supernatural element from this precious portion of Scripture. We may as well reject all Scripture, all revelation, all Christianity, as Redemption itself is from first to last more or less a miraculous or supernatural work of God, and would, by no possibility, accomplish its end if it were not. No supposed law of physical continuity can be allowed to prevent or to interfere with the free interpositions of almighty love when securing the earliest needful advantages or when working out the final and eternal interests of the family of God. Our Science and our Scripture interpretations are utterly false if they lead us to conclude that, to the Paternal Heart, the house must be more precious than the household, or that, in the eye of the Divine Father, the laws of His material creation must be more sacred than the highest well-being of His spiritual and immortal children.

Thirdly. Instead of regarding this narrative as implying overmuch condescension or even familiarity on the part of God towards man, we may well admire the pure and warm spirit which it breathes. We do not exaggerate when we affirm, that the Divine love which may be felt richly diffused throughout the paradise of the past is the very same Divine love which we may feel as we sit at the feet of Him who came from heaven to reveal it, nay, is just the same Divine love which all may expect to feel as the very “imperial air” of the paradise of the future. If, by exclusively illustrating the Divine Greatness, this opening history had suggested an idea of the Creator but little consistent with that which subsequent Scripture

presents of the Redeemer, in studying both we might doubt whether we were made acquainted with one and the same Being or whether we were led to contemplate one of the same consistent revelation. But as we meditate on the disclosures of both, we naturally conclude that our Creator is indeed our Redeemer, now revealed in the one person of Jesus Christ. Let us first visit the Cross of Calvary, and then we shall not regard the Fatherly acts of Paradise as too lowly or too homely to be real.

9. "And brought her to the man. And the man said, This now (is) bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh : she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man." We have already almost sufficiently fully dealt with these words. We need not further allude to the derivation of the word translated woman, nor need we refer to the seemingly great amount of knowledge suggested by the expression, "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." We may merely repeat, that the sacred writer may have meant no more than this, that, if the thought or emotion awakened by the first sight of Eve were rendered into the language of the writer, it might be so expressed. Doubtless, the words are intended to suggest the highest delight on the part of Adam. He had been led to survey the whole surrounding animal kingdom. We may be assured that his clear intelligent eye was full of admiration as it gazed for the first time on many a beautiful living form. Still, as hours or days advanced, the endless variety of nature appears to have failed to exclude the sense of loneliness from his heart. He may have observed the social instincts of certain of the lower ranks drawing them together and seemingly making them pleased with one another. This may have intensified the feeling of solitariness, and may have given form to the exclamation to which the first glance at one like himself may have given rise.

10. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother,

and shall cleave to his wife : and they shall be one flesh." These words we cannot regard as here prophetically used by Adam, but would rather view them as the inspired reflection of the sacred historian, and thus as having all the Divine authoritative weight which we find the great Teacher attaching to them. The mind of God was, in this way, revealed at the very opening of the sacred record with respect to the relation of the sexes and to the sacred institution of marriage. Jesus referred to this passage in proof of the fact that monogamy, to be continued to the end of life, was of direct Divine appointment, and that "from the beginning" of human history. It was thus, He means to say, founded in the constitution of human nature ; and therefore the law thus practically enacted from the first ought never to have been violated. The law of Moses, He intimates, permitted of a certain amount of relaxation, not as expressing any imperfection of the original law, but because of the hard nature of the Israelitish people, and in order to the prevention of evils which might otherwise arise. We cannot here fully treat of the principle on which this Mosaic modification proceeded.

In legislating for half-civilised nations, abstract perfection may not prove the wisest or the best feature of the code enacted. Laws must be adapted to the state and circumstances of those who are required to obey them. It is quite a mistake to imagine, that, because Divine, the Mosaic Laws and Institutions are to be viewed as suitable to all nations in every stage of social advancement. The fact that they were Divinely adapted to a people of undoubtedly peculiar character and condition, would prove them proportionally unsuitable to other peoples of a more or less dissimilar spirit and culture. However, we may remark, that it is no feeble testimony to the inspiration of this narrative, that, when polygamy was so common, nay, when it was to be recorded by the same hand that the patriarchs, who were regarded with such veneration by the whole nation, had not adhered to it, this primitive law of mar-

riage, whose violation has ever been attended with the most fearful results, was thus early placed upon its true Divine and natural basis.

II. "And they were both naked, the man and his wife ; and they were not ashamed." We may here borrow the words of Kalisch : "One bold stroke is sufficient for a master-hand to stamp a character upon a picture. The state of childlike, unconscious innocence was to be described. It is a wide and great subject. The artistic genius of our author fully fixes it by one remark : 'The man and his wife were naked, and were not ashamed.'" This is finely expressed. Doubtless, in thinking of the sublime genius of the ancient historian of creation and of primitive man, we must not forget that Divine inspiration, without which we might as well trace the finest master-pieces of statuary or painting to the native powers of some self-taught artist as ascribe the perfect pictures of this wonderful narrative to the unaided skill and genius of Moses or of any other unknown author of ancient times. We shall only add, that these few and remarkable words occupy the most appropriate place in the history, that is to say, between the story of primitive life in its perfect innocence and guileless simplicity, and the story of the same life under fearful temptation on the one hand, and under the deteriorating influences of sin and shame on the other.

Chapter V.

THE RIVERS OF EDEN.



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THE RIVERS OF EDEN.

"And a river (or stream) was coming forth from Eden to water the garden, and from thence it was parted and became into four heads. The name of the first (is) Pison : that (is) it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where (there is) gold ; and the gold of that land (is) good : there (is) bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river (stream) (is) Gihon : that (is) it which compasseth the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third river (stream) (is) Hiddekel : that (is) it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river (stream), that (is) Euphrates."

1. We at once admit that the geographical difficulty suggested by these words is very great. We need not say that some have pronounced it utterly insurmountable ; or, rather, they regard the sacred writer as displaying the geographical ignorance of his age, and as in no way Divinely inspired in order to the prevention of error.

2. We propose to deal fully with the question of a right interpretation. We are persuaded that not a little haste as well as dogmatism has distinguished a good deal of the treatment which it has received. It has been too easily assumed that the grammatical structure of the main sentence is simple, and that the real meaning is clear. We shall leave the following to indicate our views, and to be accepted or rejected as it may appear satisfactory or the reverse.

3. It may be well to begin by putting the chief difficulty in the clearest light. Perhaps this cannot be done more directly and pointedly than by quoting the following words of Wright in "Smith's Dictionary," p. 482 : "The river which flowed through Eden watered the garden, and thence branched off

into four distinct streams. The first problem to be solved is this: To find a river which, at some stage of its course, is divided into four streams, two of which are the Tigris and Euphrates." Taking our English version as it stands, and, we may say, as it is supported by the Septuagint and Vulgate, Mr. Wright has here indicated the real difficulty or real impossibility of reconciling this passage, as it stands, with the facts of geography. Accordingly, he goes on to add, "Looking for the true site of Eden in the highlands of Armenia, near the sources of the Tigris and Euphrates, and applying the names Pison and Gihon to some one or other of the rivers which spring from the same region, they have been compelled to explain away the meaning of נָהָר, the 'river,' and to give to ראשם a sense which is not supported by a single passage. In no instances is ראש (lit., 'head') applied to the source of a river. On several occasions (cf. Jud. vii. 16, Job i. 17, etc.) it is used of the detachments into which the main body of an army is divided, and analogy therefore leads to the conclusion that ראשם denotes the branches of the parent stream."

4. We may remark in passing that, apart from his general statement of the main difficulty, this writer has here stated what unduly magnifies the difficulty itself. So far as נָהָר, the "river," is concerned, we shall find that it has a variety of meanings or various shades of meaning; and that it may be explained in a way different from his without being explained away. Further, we cannot put much weight upon his remarks on ראש and ראשם, "head and heads." Of the former he says, that a sense is given to it "which is not supported by a single passage," namely, the sense of source or origin. He would render the plural, not sources, but branches. If this were correct, or at least the only fair translation, it would certainly go very far to prove the difficulty invincible. However, he does not quote a single passage directly supporting his own rendering, branches, but merely gives an illustration

by which that rendering is only analogically suggested, in this way proving that he can adduce no passage containing a real example. We hold, however, that more than one passage may be found by which the sense rejected by him may be as well sustained by analogy as that which he maintains. Again and again we find the word used of "the head" of a way, which certainly bears as real an analogy to the head or source of a river as do the examples given by him to its arms or branches, (cf. Isa. li. 20 ; Lam. ii. 19, and iv. 1 ; Ezek. xvi. 25, 31, and xxi. 21.) Nay, we go further, and maintain that, more carefully considered, the cases adduced by him by no means suggest the analogy whence his inference can be correctly drawn. The detachments referred to act as separate "bands" or "companies," as the word here rendered "heads" seems to imply, while the branches of a river continue to be in reality one inseparable whole.

Besides, the verb here rendered "parted" seems to favour the idea of separate heads or sources rather than that of arms or branches, as we may safely say, that, in the whole Bible, we have not a single instance of this verb signifying to divide into so many parts what was really one whole before, as a river by mere divergence, but find it used rather to signify to separate into parts or portions what previously existed in juxtaposition, or as two or as many individual and independent objects in a state of mere union or connection. Thus the bands or companies above referred to were made up of so many individuals separated from the general mass of men. So here, we are persuaded, these heads of rivers or simply head rivers are to be viewed as separate and independent bodies of water, and not mere branches of some one parent stream. Not only so, but we are fully persuaded that Mr. Wright has mistaken the force of the verb here rendered "went" or "went out," as if the reference were to the flow of the stream through the garden rather than to its rise in the wider region of Eden.

5. We may at once acknowledge, that, if we must regard the problem above laid down in due mathematical form as really the first to be solved, or if there were no room to doubt the correctness of our English version, the difficulty in question would appear insurmountable. We certainly can find no river "which, at some stage of its course is divided into four streams, two of which are the Tigris and Euphrates"; nor can we suppose the former existence of such a river without at the same time supposing so mighty a geographical change as we cannot feel at liberty to use by way of escape from the difficulty affirmed. We hold, however, that the really first question to be determined is, What is the true meaning of the words before us? Instead of thus resorting afresh to the sacred text, some have deemed the whole account purely *mythological*, others have treated it as *allegorical*; neither, of course, regarding the supposed error as of any consequence. The greater number, however, have maintained its *historical* character, some denying and some affirming its perfect freedom from geographical error.

Does our English translation, then, convey the real sense of the words? We by no means say that, of themselves or apart from the context, they may not be both simply and faithfully rendered, "A river went out, or was going out, of Eden to water the garden, and was thence parted," etc.; still, we cannot regard the sacred writer as meaning that the river flowed out of Eden into the garden, and on issuing from the garden was divided, without charging him with stating a most palpable self-contradiction,—that of speaking of a stream going out of Eden to water a garden which was in Eden. As well might a modern author speak of the Thames going out of England to water the county of Middlesex, or of the Tay going out of Scotland to water the Carse of Gowrie. At whatever cost, therefore, we must set such a rendering entirely aside, and, with it, all reasonings as to geography based on the supposition of a river so flowing through the garden, and so being parted or parting itself after issuing from the garden.

6. We are thus led to seek another and more suitable translation, or to inquire into the meaning or meanings of the words here employed.

First, *the noun*. Whilst we may regard *river* as its stricter and more common import, we may view it as used in the very widest sense of any kind of *flowing, stream, current, river, flood*, or even *ocean* or *sea*; the radical idea is doubtless that of *flowing*; it is often translated *flood* with the force of *sea* or *ocean*. Thus (Ps. xxiv. 2), "For He hath founded it (the earth or the world) upon the seas, and established it upon the *floods*." So Psalm xciii. 3: "The *floods* have lifted up, O Lord, the *floods* have lifted up their voice: the *floods* have lifted up their waves," taken in connection with verse 4: "The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." Passing over others, we may refer to a very marked example in Jonah ii. 3 (4): "For Thou hast cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas: and the *floods* compassed me about; all Thy billows and Thy waves passed over me;" or, as Gesenius renders the middle clause, "and the stream (singular, as in the Hebrew, yet with a plural sense as in the English version) (flood of the ocean) surrounded me." Thus is the term most freely used.

Secondly, *the verb*. Usually it means, as it has been supposed to signify here, *to go out*. It is used of every manner of issuing or going out. We may repeat, therefore, that so far as the participle here employed is itself concerned or viewed apart from the context, we could not find a more exact rendering than that of the authorised version. This, however, being inadmissible, as directly inconsistent with the context or with the fact that the garden was within Eden, the question arises, Can we find a more suitable? Now, the verb is also used of the *springing* up of *water*, as also of *plants*. We have a case of the former in Deuteronomy viii. 7: "For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that *spring* out of valleys and hills";

or, as we may note, "*in* valley and *in* hill," not *out* of, as in the English.

7. Let us now apply these observations to the case in hand. That we may treat this important and difficult subject the more carefully and thoroughly, we may, though at greater length than may seem desirable, go on to consider the various interpretations of which the words rendered, "and a river went out of Eden to water the garden," may thus be found capable. By bringing each to the test of fitness to give due force to the main words and clauses of the passage, we may come to some decided conclusion with respect to the real meaning of the sacred author. We do not know of any more satisfactory method in which we can treat many passages of somewhat obscure expression, as well as of somewhat ambiguous import.

We need hardly say, that the *first* is that already referred to as naturally suggested by our English version, but which we have found to involve a most palpable physical impossibility, that of a river going out of a region to water a spot within that region, and which therefore must at once be set aside as absolutely inadmissible. In this way we must view the geographical objection as, if not removed, at least made to assume a different form.

The *second* is due to a different combination of meanings, namely, of that of an ordinary river in the case of the noun, with that of rising up or springing from, in the case of the verb,—"*And a river was rising up, or springing from Eden to water the garden.*" We may so far anticipate as to remark here, that, if this translation cannot be fully maintained, we can find in this passage no basis for any affirmation of geographical error.

The *third*, we may say, suggested itself as soon as the utter inadmissibility of the first was clearly apprehended, yet as simply possible, and not without seeming extravagance, to be received in fact only in the absence of a simpler and more

natural ; we mean that which retains the sense of going out put upon the verb in our English version, but which supposes the noun to signify, not an ordinary river, but a flood or mass of water ; or, in effect, this : “And a flood or mass of water was going out of Eden, in the form of cloud or vapour, to water the garden.”

The *fourth*, and only other possible, gives to the noun a collective sense, and to the verb the sense of rising in or springing from rather than that of flowing through or out of : “And a flood or stream was rising in, or springing from, or was coming forth from, Eden to water the garden.” These appear to exhaust the possible combinations of the meanings which the words can here bear. The first being set aside, we may now proceed to bring the remaining three successively to the experimental test above alluded to.

8. “A river was rising in or springing from Eden, to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.” We may observe at the outset that, in thus supposing the use of the noun in the sense of an ordinary river, we give to this interpretation all the advantage of the real support derived from the fact that the noun is used in this very sense again and again in the immediate context. This, we admit, must be regarded as decidedly in favour of its correctness. Still, we can by no means regard it as of sufficient force ; nor can we acknowledge that this mode of interpretation is so satisfactory that, unless for the involved geographical difficulty, it would be assuredly adopted. With the exception of the fact just alluded to, we rather think that very little can be affirmed in support of it. Nor can we regard that fact as at all decisive, unless we are prepared to maintain that an intelligent writer cannot be supposed to use the same word in the same context in more than one sense, or rather with any different shades of meaning. We must say on the adverse side that the entire form of the first clause seems somewhat unnatural,—

"a river was springing from Eden to water the garden,"—at least if we suppose Eden to have been viewed as a region of any considerable extent. Thus, to return to a former illustration, we should not expect a more modern author to write, "The Thames was springing from England to water the county of Middlesex," but rather to this effect: "The Thames was flowing through Middlesex in order to water it." So long as it was overlooked that the garden was within Eden, it appeared most natural to say, with our English version, "a river went out of Eden to water the garden."

It is a different matter when we are required to suppose a reference to the rise rather than to the flow of an ordinary river, in the case of which not only is the expression unnatural, as just pointed out, but there seems no good reason for referring to its rise or origin at all. Besides, in this instance, as in that of the example from Deut. viii. 7, we should expect to find *in* here used, and not *from* or *out of*. The expression, too, is ambiguous,—“a river was rising in Eden,”—leaving it doubtful whether it was conceived to have sprung from one or from many fountain-heads. If the latter and more natural, then an interpretation is suggested by no means far removed from the fourth and last which we have set down as possible. If, however, we suppose Eden to have been viewed as a region of very limited extent, a reference to the rise of the stream would not appear so unnatural or so unlikely. In this case the mental eye of the writer would rest upon a fountain within the limited area, and follow the like limited course of a stream as it entered the garden and issued from it, and then behold its divergence into four still smaller streams, which were, in like manner, seen to swell into the four large and far-flowing rivers named in the sequel. Here, however, we meet with what seems to stand in the way of our thus supposing such a picture to have been really intended,—we mean the very great unlikelihood of the sacred author identifying, as thus he must have done, the whole region of Eden with some small

portion of the hill country of Armenia, whence he must have thought the Tigris and Euphrates, with the other two rivers, took their common origin.

Very much, however, might be said against all this. We shall only remark that, not only would geographical error with respect to the rivers be implied, but, unless totally ignorant of the atmospheric effect of elevated position, he must be supposed to have selected a locality unsuitable for the home of those whose persons he speaks of as protected by no manner of dress.

Further : we have already observed that the verb here used to express the idea of partition is not known to be used in the whole Bible of such a division as that of the branching out of one and the same river into two or more connected streams ; so that the clause "and from thence it was parted, or parted itself," was not so likely to have been applied to a single stream divided into so many united and dependent branches as to a mass of waters or multitude of streams into a few greater ones flowing separately and independently of one another. Again, and in keeping with this, we have also remarked as to the word rendered "heads," that it does not so well apply to two or more united arms or branches as to separate masses, bands, companies, chiefs, as here, chief rivers. This militates not a little against the interpretation now supposed. The fact that both the verb rendered "parted" and the noun rendered "heads" are alike unfavourable, whilst both agree in favouring the idea of such a division of the general water-flow of the region, as we shall by-and-by consider, appears doubly forcible. Apart altogether, then, from the question of geography, we may safely say that this view of the statement before us cannot, with any real force of argument, be held to be correct, and very far less to be the only tenable or satisfactory one.

9. We may proceed to treat of the next interpretation :

“And a flood or stream (in the form of cloud or vapour) was going out of Eden to water the garden.” As already hinted, this may appear to savour of extravagance. Still the sacred author had alluded to the rise of vapour from the entire globe, and the consequent fall of rain on the whole fruitful soil. Might he not be viewed as here alluding, in like manner, to the going forth of the clouds and vapours from all parts of Eden to provide for the showers of rain needed to water the garden? The parallel seems so far confirmatory. The more natural means, in the necessary absence of all artificial appliances, would thus be suggested. Nor does the idea of such a reference seem so far-fetched. The sacred writers were evidently familiar with the connection between the ascending mists and the descending rains. We have an instance in Jeremiah x. 13: “When He uttereth His voice there is a multitude (a noise) of waters in the heavens, and He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; He maketh lightnings with (for) the rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of His treasures.” Besides, reference had been clearly made to the waters above the firmament no less than to the waters below it; and why should we deem it strange to suppose an allusion to the rise of the lower to the higher, and thus to the constant supply of those rains which descended to water the garden as well as the whole region? In Psalm lxxv. 9, 10, highly poetical as we must regard the words, we seem to have a not inapt illustration: “Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: Thou greatly enrichest it with the *river of God*, which is full of water. . . . Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly; Thou makest it soft with showers.”

As to the peculiar mode of expression, that of a flood or stream in the form of vapour, we are not without a very striking parallel instance in Scripture. Thus, in Ecclesiastes i. 7 we have, “All the rivers run into the sea: yet the sea is not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come thither they return again,”—return, of course, in the form of cloud and

vapour, as that here spoken of is supposed by this interpretation to go forth from Eden. So Mr. Ruskin finely speaks of "the waters which fall and flow" being divided "from those which rise and float."

As, too, the sacred writer, in this book of Genesis, uses the verb here employed of the going forth of the sun, it should not appear very unnatural for him to use it of the going forth of the mists and clouds from the higher regions of Eden. If, then, a better interpretation could not be found, and if this sufficed to remove all geographical difficulty, and, further, if it stood our proposed test of suitability to the words and clauses of the passage, we do not see how the appearance of extravagance should constrain us to reject it as simply inadmissible.

Let us, then, bring it to the test referred to. The Hebrew noun being of very general signification, would thus be by no means unfairly rendered. Nor could any objection be made to the force given to the Hebrew verb. Thus far all is suitable. In the absence of human art, the purpose would thus be naturally realised. But what of the clause, "And from thence it was parted"? At what point or place could it be said to have been so;—before or after it watered the garden? The words, "to water the garden," expressing mere purpose and not accomplished fact, do not determine, as may be seen by a simple transposition, "And to water the garden, a flood or stream was going forth from Eden, and from thence it was parted." The natural inference would thus be, that the division took place as the stream of mist or vapour was going forth from Eden. It is not said that it was directly divided into four parts or portions, which would be fatal to this view of the matter, but that "it was parted and became into four heads,"—words which at least admit of the supposition of more than one intervening process between the partition or separation of the flood and the formation of the four heads spoken of. Rising in vapour and carried forth in clouds, the entire mass would be parted or separated so as to be prepared through condensation or by

transformation into rain to fall in showers on all parts of Eden, whence they rose, and, among them, on the garden, for whose sake they are conceived to have been specially provided and directed. Having thus fallen, and having thus effected their most important design, they would, by natural drainage, "become into" numerous streams in the first instance, of which, while some would remain distinct and independent, the great majority would, in the next instance, "become into four heads," or into the four chief rivers afterwards enumerated.

Should the words appear to any to convey the idea that the division was conceived to have followed the watering of the garden, then they may be taken thus,—“A flood was going forth from Eden to water the garden, and having accordingly fallen in showers and watered it, and along with it the whole region, it was, through natural drainage, parted into many streams, and eventually formed into the four principal rivers about to be named.” We need not add more with respect to the clause, “and became into four heads,” unless to indicate what we mean by the word here so rendered. We have already said that, in the absence of express example, analogy would seem to support equally the idea of sources or fountain-heads and that of arms or branches, whilst the verb translated “parted,” favours more decidedly the former than the latter. Hence, whether the division was that of the rising vapour or that of the fallen rain, the result was in perfect keeping with this interpretation, which implies the formation of so many separate and independent sources or streams, and not of so many divergent and connected branches.

Further, this view would seem to fall in with the idea of the four principal rivers of Armenia; or, if we choose, as it will fully admit, to extend Eden as far as the bounds of the early known world, we may then regard the four largest rivers at that time known as those alluded to. In this way, so far as the mere clauses are concerned, the sources may have been near or distant, so that all geographical difficulty will be set aside.

We might refer to one or two things somewhat hostile to this view, such as the fact that, without a supplementary clause, the partition of the waters is not so simply or directly set forth. Still, we do not think any of these really decisive. We leave it then to speak for itself; only adding that, if every other involved geographical error, this might be fairly defended as at least sufficient to remove the difficulty.

10. We think, however, that the *next* and *last* interpretation, with which we now proceed to deal, is at once equally free from all such difficulty and the most satisfactory in itself. We refer to that which supposes the noun translated "river" to have been used in a collective sense: "And a stream or flood (in the sense of the general water-flow of the whole region) was rising in, or springing from, or coming forth from Eden to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, or parted itself, and became into four heads." Here we may quote the following from an article in "Kitto's Cyclopædia," vol. ii., p. 471, by Dr. J. P. Smith: "It is a metonymy occurring probably, though not very frequently, in all languages, that a collective noun is sometimes used when the idea is compound and distributive. The usage is recognised in the Hebrew language by Gesenius, Ewald, and Nordheimer. This kind of synthesis would be likely to find place in a primitive, and consequently very simple, language. The multitude of droppings and tricklings, rills and streamlets, having one beneficial design, and ever tending to confluence, would, in the mind of a primeval writer, readily coalesce into a single term, a river. We have an appropriate example in Psalm lxxv. 10, where the aggregate showers is called 'the river of God, full of water.' The principle applies equally to פלג and נהר. It is therefore no unwarrantable liberty to understand by the 'river' a number of rills and rivulets dispersed throughout the ground, and flowing into one channel about the issue into the external country. If the water entered the garden as a river properly,

that is, in one body, it could not 'water the garden' without artificial appliances; and it would have divided the garden, making one part inaccessible from the other, without a boat or bridge."

We quote these words as well expressing the general view of the noun here rendered "river," and not as indicating a special view of the flow of the waters of Eden. "A stream or flood was coming forth from Eden," especially from the upland regions of it, the sum of all the streams or of the general flow of water. Here two questions seem naturally to arise: Do we find the sacred author making use, if not of the same, at least of some similar, mode of expression, or any other words in a like collective sense? and, Can any satisfactory reason or reasons be assigned for the usage now supposed? As to the former, we may again refer to the manner in which, by the briefest and simplest allusion to the rising mist, he recorded nothing short of the establishment of the rain-system of the whole world; and now, according to the present interpretation, he is to be viewed as, in a manner by no means dissimilar, alluding to the establishment of the entire river-system of Eden.

We may remark in passing that the fact, that he had already referred to the rain-system and its designed mode of watering the soil in general, decidedly favours the view now treated of, that here he refers to the river-system of Eden and its intended mode of watering the garden in particular. Further, and, what is specially to the point, in the one case a singular noun, a *mist* or *vapour*, is used collectively to express the sum of all the rising mists or vapours, which returned in showers and thus "watered the whole face of the ground"; just as he here appears to use the singular, a *stream* or *flood*, to express the sum of all the streams or flowings which were made to come forth from Eden for the special, we would by no means say for the exclusive, purpose of watering the garden. The parallel seems complete, and ought to make us careful of rejecting a usage, because our

modes of thought would prevent our employment of it, however suitable it may be to the construction of the entire passage on the one hand, and in keeping with the author's peculiar style on the other. Nor is this the only like instance. We might refer to the manner in which he more than once employs the singular, *creature*, when he means the sum of the creatures about to be referred to. We might also allude to the expression, "the *gathering* of the waters He called seas," in which He seems to refer to all lakes and seas, and therefore to mean the sum of all such *gatherings* of waters, the singular number being clearly used with a plural sense. The author's style, then, is assuredly favourable to the idea of the noun being here collectively employed, especially when connected with the parallel instance of the rising vapour or mist.

We may now consider the second question: Can any satisfactory reason or reasons be assigned for the usage now supposed? Why not use the plural number? To answer this question, we must discover the full idea, simple or complex, which he designed to convey. If we can only place ourselves in his position, and at the same time gather his general meaning, we may be able to perceive the force and propriety of every word and clause of this sentence. Now, as already remarked, he does not express the mere fact that the stream watered the garden, but the purpose for which it was made to rise at all. This expression of purpose implies the idea of Divine will and arrangement; and hence the propriety of the allusion to its rise or origin rather than to its flow or course. But, as he shows by immediate reference to the Tigris and Euphrates, his mind was fully directed to the upland parts of Armenia, whence these rivers spring, as at least a portion of Eden; so that he must also have had present to his mind the idea of the needful supply of rain in these higher regions, if the stream or streams, however small, by which the sacred spot was to be enriched, would continue to flow. But he could not possibly grasp the thought of the

Divine will thus arranging for the expressly mentioned purpose without in reality grasping the idea of the general river-system of the region, and that, too, as just said, in connection with the idea of what we have called its rain-system, though naturally he makes no direct reference to the latter. His words, then, imply an express allusion to the upland regions of Armenia, whence the stream or streams would begin to flow. He could not but know that the mass of waters, the entire water-flow, descending from these heights, would take various courses on all sides of the hills and along the numerous valleys, and that thus the entire river-system to which we have alluded would be developed, and, according as these descending waters were directed in certain of their courses, the needful supplies for the garden would be secured. With this full view of the whole, including the idea of its common origin, "the river of God which is full of water," thus present to his mind, we may clearly perceive the true reason for the peculiar mode of expression here employed. The unity of the whole river-system being present to his mind, he most naturally and appropriately uses the noun, stream or flood, collectively, or in the singular rather than in the plural number.

It may, indeed, be replied that the sacred writer might have simply stated the Divine purpose without referring to the manner in which it was realised. If, however, he had intended to do this and no more, he need not have referred to the rise of the supposed river, nay, it would have been more natural for him to have alluded to its flow or course alone. But, that he really intended to allude to the whole river-system is evident from what he has actually done. In the following verses he shows that he designed to set forth the unity of that system. We are not left, therefore, to reason as to what he might have done. If, then, as we thus infer, he purposed to describe that system as one connected whole, we cannot conceive a better method than that just stated, namely, that of

speaking collectively of the whole water-flow of the region as a stream or flood, or of using the word rendered "river" in a sense looser or freer than the English term ever naturally conveys.

Let us now, accordingly, proceed to bring this interpretation to the test of consistency with the various words and clauses of the sentence, and with the statements of the entire passage. Here we must once more traverse nearly the same ground.

As to the word rendered "river," we would again advert to the example from the book of Jonah, where, though in the singular form, our translators, rendering it "floods," have correctly given it a plural sense: "For Thou hast cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the *floods* compassed me about: all Thy billows and Thy waves passed over me"; or, as Gesenius renders the middle clause, "And the stream (flood of the ocean) surrounded me." Here, then, we find the word in question translated "floods" or "flood," and evidently used collectively of all the flowings of the deep with which the prophet was surrounded. That the same word should be employed in an earlier portion of Scripture in a like collective sense, or with reference to the sum of all the flowings which made up the water-system of Eden, cannot well be accounted strange or unnatural.

Again, as already hinted at, this collective sense appears to agree best with the only meaning which, unless according to the previous interpretation, the whole context will allow us to give to the participle, that of rising or springing, and not that of flowing or going out of the region of Eden. As also already indicated, the uplands of Armenia were present to his mind; so that, intending to refer to more than one large river thence descending from numerous points, and not to allude exclusively to any one stream passing through the garden, the idea of the one common origin of all would naturally suggest the use of a singular term in a plural sense.

In passing we may observe, though the criticism may seem rather minute, that the preposition used, not *in*, but *from* or *out of*, appears to fall in with the view thus taken,—“coming out from Eden,” from the whole region, from all parts of it, chiefly from the heights just said to have been assuredly present to his mind. So much for the first clause. What of the next,—“to water the garden”? We have pretty fully treated of this already. However, we may here add a few further remarks. We need not repeat that this is not said to have been the exclusive purpose.

It might seem as if it were out of the question to speak of the entire flow of water, when so small a portion of it could possibly reach the garden. It is to be remembered, however, that the sacred writer is treating of the early history of the world and of the preparation of a home for the first of men, and therefore speaks of Divine arrangement on a large scale, and yet not on too large a scale for the end in view. That the most tiny stream or streamlet might continue to fulfil its intended purpose, unless we suppose the employment of miraculous agency, the whole water-system of the region must be fully completed and continuously maintained. According to this view, in fact, he is seen to present the whole matter in the most intelligent form. In doing so, he at the same time acts in harmony with the spirit of his entire narrative, in which he represents all natural objects in their relation of subordination to the welfare of man. He would thus lead his reader to think of God, when arranging for the general water-flow of Eden at large, as making full provision for the supply of the garden in particular. This, we may remark, is further in keeping with the spirit of the whole Bible, as we may find strikingly illustrated (Deut. xxxii. 8): “When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.”

“And from thence it was parted, or parted itself.” The

whole force of the geographical objection is due to the supposition that a river flowed through the garden and was on issuing from it divided into the four rivers spoken of. It is, therefore, of importance to determine the actual point or place of partition. In reference to this we have already, by means of a simple transposition, shown that the statement by no means implies that it was at or near the garden,—“And, to water the garden, a stream or flood was coming forth from Eden, and from thence it was parted.” Thus the reference is palpably to Eden; that is to say, the general flow of water, caused thus to arise or to come forth from all parts, and especially from the heights of Eden, was, in thus issuing, divided.

But, it may be asked, In what sense could the flowing waters be said to have been so parted or separated as to become into four heads, heads of rivers or head rivers? In the first instance, they would be naturally conceived to flow downwards and outwards in numerous streams and in all directions. Of these some would hold on in their separate channels, while very many would unite their waters and form a few larger streams, which, as stated in the text, by their volume and circuit, would form the chief rivers of the undefined region of Eden. The mode of expression here employed seems to harmonize with this view of the subject. The real force of the verb is given to it, that of separating into distinct and independent bodies, as the rivers referred to, not that of connected and dependent bodies, as the four arms or branches of the erroneously supposed ordinary stream.

The same holds good as to the force of the clause, “and became into four heads,” which, though it might be used in the case of direct division, admits of the idea of the whole mass being, as we have stated, in the first instance separated into numerous streams, and in the second made “to become into four heads” or four chief rivers, as the final result of the separation. We need hardly note, that, by the use of the word

“heads” or chiefs, chief rivers, room is left for the supposition of others of inferior importance. We might have recurred to our illustration from the book of Job, where the Chaldeans are said to have made out so many “bands,” or “heads” as in this sentence, in which case from the mass of available persons would in the first place be separated so many individuals, whilst these, in the next, would be formed, or would “become into,” the requisite number of “bands” or companies ; just as we have said, that here we have the mass of waters separated into numerous streams, and these again, by confluence, reduced in number and increased in volume, till they, as here stated, “became into four heads,” the four chief rivers of the immediate context. Thus, we think, this interpretation appears to consist with the force and meaning of all the words and clauses of the sentence, and at the same time to imply the record of facts befitting their place in this descriptive account of the garden.

II. We have thus dealt with the four modes of interpretation suggested by the meanings which may be fairly attached to the noun and verb whose proper rendering is the main point to be here determined. We have found that our English translation, with the meaning which it suggests, must be entirely set aside, as involving an instance of the plainest self-contradiction. The rendering which implies the rise of an ordinary river in Eden and its flow through the garden, and which alone can support the usual charge of geographical error, instead of yielding a natural and appropriate meaning, was found by no means consistent with the exact sense of more than one word or with the general facts of the case. The next mode of interpretation, which supposed the verb to mean “to go out,” as in our English version, and the noun to mean a stream or flood of water in the form of vapour, though confessedly open to the charge of seeming extravagance, yet appeared to consist with the sense of the words and clauses of the sentence, to have more

than one argument in its favour, and to be capable of defence in the absence of a simpler and better. Further, it appeared to remove from the passage all real geographical difficulty. Such a simpler and better interpretation, we are fully persuaded, is to be found in that which we have just considered. The only matter, at least, now to be settled, pertains to its consistency with the sacred author's subsequent allusions to the four great rivers.

12. We may now go on to deal with the question thus suggested. Can we really find what may be fairly called four chief or principal rivers of Eden? Hitherto we have been assuming two things,—*first*, that the Hebrew term rendered “heads” may mean either heads of rivers or head rivers; and, *secondly*, that the Tigris and Euphrates are without doubt two of the rivers referred to. As to the former, so far as our interpretation of the passage is concerned, it matters little whether the one or the other meaning be attached to the term. However, as these “heads” are immediately afterwards called “rivers” by the author himself, we deem it best to interpret “head-rivers” or “chief rivers.” As to the latter, the Euphrates is expressly named, whilst the descriptive reference to Assyria proves that the Hiddekel must be identified with the Tigris. Doubt still remains with respect to the other two, the Pison and the Gihon. We shall not refer to the various theories which have been proposed, some with a view to the removal of the geographical difficulty due to the mistaken supposition of a common origin, and others proceeding on a principle of an implied geographical error. Interpreting the passage as we have done, we of course regard these theories as more or less erroneous. As, however, two of the rivers certainly rise in the same mountainous region, it would seem not unnatural to suppose that the sources of all the four, if by no means one and the same, were at least not far remote. This would consist well with the view which we have been giving of the subject. We think, too,

that it also consists as well with geographical fact. However, as other and more distant rivers have been regarded as certainly referred to on the ground of the descriptive terms in which they are spoken of, we may first consider the case of these, and then return to the consideration of those which we rather suppose to have been intended.

13. Identifying Havilah with India, some have supposed that by Pison was intended the Ganges or the Indus. Though tradition rather supports the former, as the latter was nearer and more likely to be referred to, we may here at present treat of it. As the Gihon is connected with Cush or Ethiopia, it has been very stoutly maintained that the Nile must certainly have been meant. In the meantime, let us accept, as the four rivers of the narrative, the Indus, the Nile, the Tigris, and Euphrates. These are regarded as the four chief rivers, *flumina principalia*,—of the world as known to the sacred author. Of course he is understood to have revealed an ignorance of geography such as was common long after his time, in that he, as he is supposed, traced them to one common source.

We shall say no more on this point, but simply ask, If these were really the four chief rivers intended, how far would the fact harmonize with our interpretation of the passage? We reply, Perfectly: for, in the first instance, we may well imagine the sacred writer, from his point of view, calling them the head or chief rivers of the world; whilst, in the second, we are not informed how far Eden extended to the east or to the south. For aught indicated by the indefinite term, it might certainly have stretched eastward beyond the Indus or even the Ganges, and southward as far as the sources of the Nile, much more remote doubtless, as they are, than he conceived them to be. Now, we have found our passage to refer, not to the flow of the river through Eden, but to the origination and establishment of the whole river-system of Eden, in which, we are assured, was specially and Divinely included the need-

ful arrangement for the irrigation of the garden. We thus regard the author as simply alluding to at least the greater part of the known world, and not to the more limited region to which he is usually thought to refer. His mode of expression, however, will apply as freely to the larger as to the smaller geographical area.

14. However, though the identification of the Pison and Gihon with the Indus and Nile would thus consist with the narrative, and involve no geographical error or even difficulty, we are persuaded that two very different streams were intended, whose sources and those of the Tigris and Euphrates may be traced to one and the same very limited region. There seems to be no real evidence whatever in proof of the identity of Havilah and India ; so that we are not bound to look so far east as the Indus or Ganges. The most correct idea appears to be that which identifies the former with a region of which Colchis, the celebrated gold country of the ancient Greeks, was a part.

May not a radical connection be traced between the names ? Havilah or Chavilah would certainly suggest no resemblance ; but setting aside the points, and giving the ך the vowel rather than the consonantal sound, we have Chuilh or Choilh ; and, dropping the ך, as it might easily be lost, we get Cholh or Colh ; then, adding the Greek termination, we have Colhis or Colchis. This may be fanciful. We refer to it as at least somewhat remarkable, if not highly evidential. Against the supposition of any reference to Colchis, Gesenius has indeed said that, among the Jews, the name of the Colchians is כַּסְלִיּוּם, Kasluhim. When we consider, however, how names may change, and how the same people may have more than one name among other peoples, this argument will be felt to be insufficient. At any rate, the Havilah of Gesenius, Kalisch, and others can on no account be regarded as that here referred to. Kalisch describes it as "the territory between the Persian and

Arabian Gulf," and then adds what entirely disproves his assertion, "But there exists no river which takes such a remarkably circuitous course," or, we may add, can possibly be such a river as that referred to. That there should be more than one country bearing the same name is what we might expect to find in ancient as in modern times. Besides, the Havilah referred to must have been too well known to the author of this history to admit of the possibility of such an egregious blunder as that above indicated, even if we set aside all idea of Divine guidance or inspiration. We see no reason for preferring this or any other territory to that already referred to as including the gold country of the ancients.

We may make a few like remarks with respect to the Cush or Ethiopia with which the Gihon is here associated. Maintaining that it included at least the African country of that name, some have strongly insisted that the Nile must have been intended. We think, however, that this can hardly possibly be the case. Kalisch has very justly remarked, that, when he came to speak of the Euphrates, the sacred historian gives no account of its course, or of aught fitted to identify it, and that for the simple reason that it was so well known as to need no identification. If this can be fairly said of the Euphrates, still more forcibly may the same be said of the Nile. To a people who had lived for centuries in Egypt, why provide the means by which they might be enabled to identify the Nile? If the simple name Euphrates was sufficient in the one case, surely the simple name of the Nile was sufficient in the other. But what of the Cush or Ethiopia alluded to? There seems the clearest evidence of a Cush or Ethiopia in Asia as well as in Africa. As in the instance of Havilah, so in that of Cush, we seem to have undoubted proof that branches of the same tribe gave their common name to different countries. Can we find, then, two rivers, whose sources are comparatively or actually not far from those of the Tigris and Euphrates, and which answer the description here given?

We may say that this subject has been dealt with in a very interesting and intelligent way by Colonel Chesney in his "Expedition to the Euphrates." He would identify the Pison with the Halys, which rises in Armenia, by no means at a great distance from the springs of the Tigris and Euphrates, and flows into the Black Sea. If, with Chesney, we view Havilah as including a much larger territory than Colchis, then the Halys may be viewed as, not in the fullest sense, "compassing the whole land," but bounding, or skirting, or forming one of the boundaries of it, and that in consistency with what seems to be the force of the expression here used. On this point we may quote the valuable remarks of Kalisch (note, p. 96), "It is impossible to understand סובב here as describing a complete circle; we cannot take the word in its rigorous sense; we are, therefore, permitted to interpret it as nearly synonymous with הולך, in ver. 14 (comp. Cant. iii. 3); and it may signify that the rivers *traverse* those countries, so that their course seems to *comprehend* or to *circumscribe* their territory." Thus the exact idea expressed appears to be that the river so describes its course as at some point at least to present the entire region alluded to as beyond it or there bounded by it. Of the Halys, or Kizil Irmák, Colonel Chesney (Exped. i. 3) remarks, that it "has its sources at two places, both of which are much farther to the eastward than they are generally represented on the maps. Of these sources, the most northern are on the sides of the Gemin Beli Tágh; but the others are on the western slopes of the Kará-bel group, which separate the springs of this river from those of the Euphrates at a spot about seventy miles E.N.E. from Sivás, the seat of one of the local governments of Asiatic Turkey."

At the risk of breaking the more natural course of remark, we may here go on to quote the following from Colonel Chesney, as interesting on the one hand, and as tending to cast a pleasing light on the general subject on the other: (p. 296) "At the head of the fertile valleys of the Halys, Aras, Tigris, and

Euphrates, we find, as might be expected, the highest mountains which were known for a great many centuries after the flood; and in this lofty region are the sources of the four great streams above mentioned, which flow through Eden in directions tending towards the four cardinal points, embracing, as their diverging streams flow onward, a wider extent of territory, emblematical of the diffusion of mankind from the same common spot in the centre of the ancient world. . . . Those only who have travelled over a blighted wilderness, exposed to the scorching rays of a noon-day sun, tortured with the apprehension of missing the still distant well, can feel in all its force how much the fitness of any territory to be the abode of man in a state of bliss must depend on the abundance of its waters. It is not, therefore, at all surprising that tradition should have assigned, as the site of the earthly paradise, the fertile region watered by the numerous affluents of the Halys, Araxes, Tigris, and Euphrates; especially since this tract, owing to the variety of its surface, climate, and temperature, is adapted for the growth of almost every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. . . . (p. 275) With respect to the second tract, the land of Havilah, after much pains and research, Reland concludes that it coincides with the Colchis of the ancients. . . . It appears that when the earth was divided in the days of Peleg, the sons of Cush directed their course towards this region; and their progress may be traced as they turned westward, at the foot of the Caucasus, advancing along the shores of the Black Sea, till they penetrated as far as the banks of the Halys. . . . (p. 276) Calmet says, on the authority of Haiton, that there are in Armenia, in the territory of the Colchians, the cities of Chalva and Chavata, also the region or land of Chavata; and there exists at the present day the town or village called Haivali, situated on the slope of the Aji Tágh, westward of the Euphrates, towards the Halys, where, moreover, gold is found. . . . The amount paid by the different satrapies in gold and silver to Xerxes

must of itself establish the fact, that not only in Asiatic Ethiopia, but generally throughout the Assyrian empire, the precious metals were anciently obtained in great abundance. They might in all probability still be found in the same regions; for Malte Brun states that gold is obtained at Ma'den, and indications of it were recently met with by Mr. Ainsworth a little south of that place; from whence, according to Sestini, gold was carried to Constantinople as late as the year 1781. At this day, the silver mines of Gumish Khánah and Denik, near Tárábuzún, as well as those between Yúz-Kát and Tókát, might be turned to some account." These quotations serve, though we may not accept all the opinions expressed, to prove that the region in question is by no means unlike what the words of our passage would suggest, and that the Halys may assuredly have been the very river here called Pison. At least, we can see nothing in the sacred text to forbid the identification of the one with the other. We may add that the size, length, and importance of this river would fully harmonize with the idea of its being one of four head or principal rivers of Eden. Yet, we must say, that there is another river, whose origin is very considerably nearer the sources of the other rivers, and which some have, not without reason, regarded as that really intended. We refer to the Kur or Cyrus of the ancients, of which Kiel and Delitzsch observe: "Which rises in Armenia, flows northward to a point not far from the eastern border of Colchis, and then turns eastward to Iberia, from which it flows in a south-easterly direction to the Caspian Sea. The expression, 'which compasseth the whole land of Chavilah,' would apply to the course of this river."

If this closing remark could be shown to be fully correct, we should decidedly prefer this river to the Halys. On the principle that the above expression is to be taken in the limited sense already given to it, and supposing Havilah so to extend as to be skirted or bounded by the Kur, as, by supposing it to extend considerably westwards, it may be said to be skirted or

bounded by the Halys, we seem left free to choose between the two, according as other reasons may seem to suggest. As the Kur joins the Araxes before entering the Caspian, we were at first inclined to regard it as an affluent of that river, and thus to give the decided preference to the Halys. By viewing the two as but one river, we may regard them as forming one of the four chief rivers of which we are in quest. In this case, the Halys must be included as being another. If, however, we consider the union of the Kur and Araxes as no more a reason for treating them as one river than the union of the Tigris and Euphrates should be deemed a reason for reckoning them but one river also, then we seem to have some good ground for the preference of the Kur. As we can easily exclude, if necessary, the Halys from the number of chief rivers, by simply supposing that Eden was not conceived to have extended so far to the west, we can most fairly consider the Kur, the Araxes, the Tigris, and Euphrates as the four principal rivers of Eden. In this case, we have four such rivers all rising within a very limited geographical area indeed. Eden itself will thus lie the more decidedly to the east. No fifth river can be pointed out whose source and volume could justly prove that the reference of the sacred writer to only four was in the slightest degree incorrect.

And, further, we think the words already quoted from Colonel Chesney seem to indicate, if need be, a very good geographical line of separation between the region whence spring the four rivers in question, and that to which he traces the sources of the Halys. This will be at once apparent, if we simply requote the words referred to. The Halys, he says, "has its sources at two places, both of which are much farther to the eastward than they are generally represented on the maps. Of these sources the most northern are on the sides of the Gemin Beli Tágh; but the others are on the western slopes of the *Kara-bel group*, which separate the springs of this river from those of the *Euphrates* at a spot about seventy miles east-north-

‘east from Sívás.’ Two things are here indicated ;—the one, that, as the words were at first quoted to prove, the origin of the Halys was sufficiently far to the east to show that it might be geographically ranked with the rivers of the sacred text ;—the other, that, as they are now requoted to indicate, if the four rivers above mentioned meet the requirements of the text, or if the Kur and the Araxes are to be taken thus separately, the Kara-bel group of mountains may be very consistently viewed as bounding the region of Eden, at least at one point to the west.

We may again quote the following from Chesney, p. 280 :—
 “We proceed to notice the territory occupied by the descendants of Cush. This territory, which was bounded on the north by the Araxes or Gihon, and which constituted the Cossea of the Greek and Latin writers, was the abode of the posterity of Nimród up to the time of the Jewish historian, who says of the sons of Ham, ‘Time has not at all affected the name of Chus ; for the Ethiopians over whom he reigned are to this day, both by themselves and by all the men of Asia, called Chusites.’ The word Ethiopian is derived from *αἶθω* (*aitho*), to burn, and *ὄψ*, or *ὄψις* (*opsis*), face, a person with a burnt or black or very dark face, such as are the Kurds and other mountaineers of those parts, though they live in a temperate climate. On the Nahr Malcha, a little way north of Babel, are the ruins of Kush of Abú-l-fidá ; a name which seems to be quite as ancient as the former city, and from whence and its neighbourhood the inhabitants were transported by Shalmanezzer to Samaria. The word Chus remains almost unchanged in Kush, Shus, Sus, Kushasdan, the Land of the Sun, and the Land of the Magi. It is also repeatedly mentioned in close connection with the territory lying northward and north-eastward of Babylonia. The Jews are to be called from Assyria, from Cush, from Elam, and from Shinar. Again, Elam and his brother Assur were tributaries of Chus, whose descendants occupied the country of the Hindi, the Paracani,

and the Ethiopians, the Asia of Moses Cheronensis. This people were indifferently called by other nations Cushan, Cuseans, Erythreans, Oritæ, etc. ; and some of them passed into Africa under the name of Hycsos, led by their enterprising chief Saïtes, bearing still their original designation of Ethiopians. That Asiatic Cush has been rightly placed in the territory adjoining Colchis seems tolerably clear from some of the old writers. . . . Moreover, the Armenians call the Persians, and all the Hunnish tribes within the Caspian gates, Kushanians, and the whole tract eastward of the sources of the Araxes or Gihon is expressly called Ethiopia by a remarkable Hebrew traveller, the well-known Benjamin of Tudela, who visited this part of the world in the twelfth century, not only took notice of the territory of Cush, but likewise of the river Gihon."

We shall add no remarks to these able and learned discussions, unless by way of drawing one or two inferences. *First*, there seems no room to doubt of the existence of an Asiatic Cush ; *secondly*, it may have extended indefinitely eastward, and embraced those regions which were peopled by a race or by races of men whose complexion naturally suggested the name of Ethiopia ; *thirdly*, it may fairly be regarded as embracing the territory bordered or bounded by the Araxes ; *fourthly*, we may, therefore, fairly conclude that the Araxes may be regarded as the Gihon of the sacred writer.

15. Thus, then, may we regard the Kur, Araxes, Tigris, and Euphrates, all rising within a very limited area, as answering to the four rivers of the text. They are the four chief rivers of the region to which they belong. We have said that the very use of the term rendered chief implies that other and inferior streams existed—nay, might abound.

What now, it may be asked, of the site of the garden and of the actual method of watering it ? It will at once occur that, as the sacred writer is regarded as alluding to the general

water-system, and not to any special stream which passed through that sacred place, we cannot be said to have any definite information on either subject. This is certainly correct. We are simply informed of the facts, that the needful irrigation was Divinely provided for, that this was effected by the due arrangement of the entire river-system of Eden, that that system involved the development of four large and important rivers, and that Eden embraced, however much more, at least a large part of ancient Armenia.

We are left entirely in ignorance as to whether the garden was planted by the side of one of the rivers mentioned by name, or by the side of some inferior stream, or in some delightful spot watered by more than one crystal rivulet. We are not required to suppose that it was unduly elevated, or at all near the sources of the four great rivers referred to. Is this indefiniteness to be viewed as in the slightest degree militating against the correctness of this interpretation? We think decidedly not. It seems rather to lend it not a little positive support, as suggestive of one fine and important feature of Scripture from beginning to end, namely, that of maintaining a Divine silence as to what would tend to gratify mere curiosity or to encourage mistaken interest or superstitious feeling, and observing a like Divine freeness in the communication of all information really fitted to subserve the higher interests of mankind. The propriety of this in the present instance might be illustrated by reference to the endless and needless speculation and often worse than perverted devotion called forth by "the Sacred Places of the Bible."

Enough is implied to suggest that the fittest region was Divinely selected for the home of primitive man, and that it was virtually that which, after the deluge, formed the second home of the human race, whence we seem to have abundant evidence the streams of human life, as from a common fountain, have flowed to all regions of the earth. Something more precious than mere local knowledge we have found to be con-

veyed, even the lesson that the blessed Creator, in determining the whole geographical constitution of Eden, had fully in view the preparation of a fit abode for the parents of our race, and that we may be assured of His continuing, as He thus began, to make the whole physical constitution and development of the world subservient to the moral and spiritual culture and well-being of mankind ; whilst, at the same time, we are taught to direct our whole and undivided attention to the vastly important truths symbolically and otherwise set forth, in the brief history of the garden, clearly and impressively before our view.

16. It remains for us now to add only a few remarks with respect to one or two points which we would not entirely overlook. We have indicated the presence of gold and of other precious metals in the countries which we suppose to be included in what we regard as the land of Havilah. Not a little controversy has arisen with respect to what is here rendered bdellium. We do not think we can do better than quote the following from the valuable and interesting discussion of Colonel Chesney, the more especially as he at the same time refers to the onyx stone, the third and last of the precious things distinguishing Havilah : (p. 279) "Some writers consider it (bdellium) the gum which is described under that name by Pliny ; while others, apparently with greater reason, have referred it to some more precious substance. The learned Reland, for example, thought that schoham, or emerald, was the bdellium of Moses. . . . Kimchi and Benjamin of Tudela, with more probability, have fixed upon the pearl ; and it is remarkable that, in the same sentence, the latter designates this precious stone by the words bdellium and lulu. This opinion has since received the powerful support of Bochart, and is strengthened by finding the pearl fishery expressly mentioned in the Periplus as existing off the coast of Colchis ; which, says Diodorus Siculus, abounds in gold,

smaragds, and crystals. It may be added that the gum supposed to be here indicated, as well as the turquois, beryls, *and the onyx*, is found there in still greater quantity : therefore, whether the Hebrew word really meant a gum, a stone, or a pearl, the locality in question is equally proper, since they are all to be found there."

The only other point to which we need refer relates to the allusion to the Hiddekel or Tigris. And we would simply quote the ingenious and learned words of Kalisch : (p. 92) "This river has nearly the same name in the Aramæan languages and in Arabic, with the omission only of the first letter, or of the hiatus ; and the Samaritan version has likewise this abbreviated form with the article (דִּהֶקֶל). But the root דִּקֶּל signifies, in the Persian language, *arrow*, which name was given to it because of its swiftness;" (p. 110) : "The identity of Hiddekel and Tigris being incontestably established, we can find no serious difficulty in the Biblical notice, that it flows **קִדְמַת אֲשׁוּר**, which words are generally rendered, 'toward the east of Assyria.' But, as the Tigris was considered as the *western* boundary of that empire, it was generally endeavoured to remove this discrepancy by observing, that the term **אֲשׁוּר** includes Babylonia and Mesopotamia also ; that it extended, therefore, to the Euphrates, which river is even used as a symbol of the monarchy of Babylon (Isa. viii. 7) ; and that Assyria is applied in the same comprehensive sense, and even embracing all the lands to the Mediterranean, by most of the classical writers, as Herodotus, Strabo, Arrian, and others. But this opinion seems objectionable from the following cogent reasons: (1.) In Genesis, the word **אֲשׁוּר** designates always the proper Assyria, which is situated in the east of the Tigris, between Armenia, Susiana, and Media ; it is clearly distinguished from Babylon (see Gen. x. 10, xii. 22, and our notes there) ; and the usage of later biblical books can be no proof for the application in the earlier Pentateuch. But (2.), Even if we admit this unsupported extension of the word, it does not remove the difficulty,

for the Tigris would still not be *in the east* of Assyria ; it would intersect the country, the provinces in the east of the Tigris remaining a part of the Assyrian empire, and it would be very strange to designate the boundaries of a country by the newly-acquired territory, without regard to the old and more important provinces. We take, therefore, קדמת here in its primary and original signification of *before*, or *in the face of*, like קדם in Ps. cxxxix. 5, and Isa. ix. 11, where it is opposed to אהור. Seen from Palestine or any other western country, the Tigris flows *before* the old Assyrian empire ; and thus, both the genius of the language and ancient geography obtain their right. The Septuagint also translates קדמת אשור by κατέναντι Ἀσσυρίων ; and Strabo mentions the town Ninos, in the *east* of the Tigris, as the capital of Syria, that is of Assyria. But to translate, 'the Tigris flowed *in the eastern part* of Assyria,' would be arbitrary."

Chapter VI.

EXPOSITION OF THE THIRD SECTION.

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Ch. iii.

Ch. iii. 1. And the Serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which Jehovah God had made. And he said to the woman, Hath God really said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2. And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden ; 3. but of the fruit of the tree which (is) in the midst of the garden, God hath said, You shall not eat of it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die. 4. And the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die: 5. for God knows that in the day you eat of it then your eyes will be opened, and you will be as God, knowing good and evil.

6. And when the woman saw that the tree (was) good for food, and that it (was) pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make (one) wise, she took of its fruit, and ate, and gave also to her husband with her ; and he ate.

7. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they (were) naked ; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves girdles.

8. And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day : and the man and his wife hid themselves from the face of Jehovah God among the trees of the garden. 9. And Jehovah God called the man, and said to him, Where (art) thou? 10. And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I (was) naked ; and I hid myself. 11. And He said, Who told thee that thou (art) naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree of which I

commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 12. And the man said, The woman whom Thou gavest (to be) with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate. 13. And Jehovah God said to the woman, What is this (that) thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I ate.

14. And Jehovah God said to the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou (shalt be) cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15. and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.

16. To the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; and thy desire (shall be) to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

17. And to the man He said, Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat: cursed (shall be) the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat (of) it all the days of thy life; 18. And thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19. in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou returnest to the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou (art), and to dust thou shalt return.

20. And the man called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

21. And Jehovah God made to Adam and to his wife garments of skins, and clothed them.

22. And Jehovah God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: 23. therefore Jehovah God sent him out of the garden of Eden, to till the ground whence he was taken. 24. and He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of

the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of the sword, which turned itself (continually) to keep the way of the Tree of Life.

I.

“And the Serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which Jehovah God had made. And he said to the woman, Hath God really said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which (is) in the midst of the garden, God hath said, You shall not eat of it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die. And the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die: for God knows that in the day you eat of it then your eyes will be opened, and you will be as God, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree (was) good for food, and that it (was) pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make (one) wise, she took of its fruit, and ate, and gave also to her husband with her; and he ate. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they (were) naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves girdles.”

1. The sacred writer may appear to introduce the story of the Temptation and Fall very abruptly, and to convey the impression that but little time was granted for that full amount of instruction, to which we have already alluded, and without which the first transgression could not well be regarded as peculiarly heinous. However, in so brief a history, facts considerably distant may seem to have immediately followed one another. For aught to the contrary, the rich and beautiful garden may have been kept and enjoyed, and again and again visited by the sacred and ever welcome Presence for a much longer period than the narrative would directly suggest, or than we may be wont to suppose. Much knowledge may have been imparted and received. There may have been no lack of needful preparation for the coming contest. We may have no reason to say, No sooner created than assailed, no sooner made perfectly happy than plunged into an abyss of woe. The enjoyment of good, at once so great in itself and so evidently the gift of Him who made and did not disdain to

visit them, was doubtless sufficiently rich and long continued to have taught Adam and Eve at least the one lesson of filial confidence and love, and thus to have armed them against every possible insinuation of Parental indisposition to promote their highest well-being. In passing on to this part of the record we may be conscious of receiving a shock, and of being tempted to think that surely so subtle and malignant a foe might have had no access to so sweet and innocent a home. We may at least well say, that, if endowed with power to draw so lovely a picture of purity and peace as that already contemplated, we could hardly have had the heart, if we had the power, to hang up beside it one so sad and terrible as that which we now proceed to consider. So, we may suppose, multitudes prepared to conclude. We may even admit that, naturally and universally, the gentler feelings would thus recoil. If, however, when more correctly and more comprehensively contemplated, this picture is found true to the realities of human nature and experience, instead of tracing it to some highly creative, yet gloomy, imagination, we shall be led the more surely to infer, that it must have been drawn by no unaided hand, or at the impulse of no uninspired mind. With this idea by no means dimly conceived, we would now go on to treat of this most serious and difficult part of the narrative.

2. Here it may be well to repeat, that, though the idea of Probation almost exclusively suggests itself, we are not, on that account, to overlook or forget the primary and more direct Divine purpose of moral and spiritual Instruction. We are not warranted to infer that, when understood literally, this narrative implies the arbitrary affirmation of sovereignty on the one side, and the hard and unfatherly demand of submission on the other. Sovereignty was undoubtedly to be acknowledged. Submission was as undoubtedly to be accorded. Still, not a shadow of harshness or of needless severity of any description can be traced. All, we are persuaded, was perfectly

arranged to meet the case and to further the interests of these newly created children of God. If they had simply obeyed the command, or simply followed the instructions, or, we may add, simply taken the warning which they received, they would most assuredly have found that their Divine Father had provided the wisest and best means by which they could possibly rise, whether to the highest and freest development of their own nature, or to the Divinely guaranteed eternal enjoyment of all those birthright privileges and possessions which appear so finely symbolized by the tree of life.

We may safely add, that, thoroughly probationary as we may regard the treatment of primitive man, it does not seem to have been by any means singular. We can hardly suppose a better reason for the name, "the elect angels," than this, that they seem to have undergone some similar trial of moral and spiritual principle, and that they fully and finally stood the appointed test. Before entering His infinitely important ministry, the blessed Saviour Himself "was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil." We need hardly add, that to all intents the law of Christian life is to a very great extent of probationary character, often involving, as an apostle affirms, "heaviness through manifold temptations." The end, however, is worthy of the means,—"that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

3. As these words suggest, Probation appears to involve Temptation in one form or another. We may suppose a simple test of sincerity or of strength, as in the case of Abraham and the proposed sacrifice of Isaac. In such a case, God alone may act; and then His agency will involve no more than the application of some suitable test, and that solely for a good purpose. This same purpose may be sought in a different way. Temptation properly so-called may be permitted. In

this case, while the evil agent aims really and directly to lead to evil, the Divine permission must still be held to be intended for good alone. The nature and end of the temptation in question, will perhaps, be more clearly perceived if this simple distinction be kept in view.

4. "And the Serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which Jehovah God had made." What shall we say of these words? Shall we take them literally or allegorically? Many strongly urge the propriety of taking them in the latter sense, as alone free from insuperable difficulty or worthy of so sacred and Divine a narrative. We do not say that the great first temptation might not have been presented in some allegorical form. At the same time, we think the more literal interpretation on the whole the simplest and best. We have again and again remarked, that many expressions in a history like this must be taken with very considerable latitude of meaning. In fact, all descriptive allusions, not only to Divine words and works, but to the spiritual world in general, ought to be treated as necessarily obscure and indeterminate. Keeping this in view, we may reach the most natural and truest sense, by treating the whole historically.

5. Whatever the details, the only view of this passage which can possibly be satisfactorily and finally maintained must imply the agency of that great and mysterious Being to whom we find the clearest reference in other parts of Scripture, and especially in the New Testament. The testimony of Christ and His apostles seems absolutely decisive. Some, indeed, strongly object to the use of the New Testament as an authoritative and infallible interpreter of the Old. While in this we cannot agree with them, we hold that this narrative cannot be fairly interpreted on any principle, without appearing to involve the whole meaning which, we have said, Christ and His apostles put upon it. Thus, according to the words of God addressed to the serpent, and usually called the Prot-

evangelium, we are expressly told that the Seed of the woman would crush or bruise the serpent's head, not the head of one of the serpent's brood. The serpent, in fact, is clearly represented as living on and continuing to do evil till the time of the promised Deliverer. As we are considering the words independently at present, we do not say how far distant the implied time must be admitted to be. The coming of some Mighty One is at least announced. Thus clearly no mere serpent could be meant. When the words referred to are more fully interpreted, it will be found that with the serpent we must associate in one way or another the idea of a great Fallen Spirit, at once the tempter of the parents and the spiritual foe of the race of mankind. We need not suppose that the sacred author thus fully understood the words of God, though he may have known more than many imagine. Nor need we maintain that Adam and Eve were at all aware of the real character of their terrible deceiver. It has been well observed, that the very meanness of the external form rendered but the more aggravated the sin of receiving from such a source any false and wicked testimony against God.

6. We cannot then, for a moment agree with those who suppose no more than an ordinary serpent. We wonder that any one should believe it possible for the sacred writer to attribute so much intelligence to an irrational animal, especially as he had just drawn so broad a distinction between man and all other creatures. We would rather accept the view of those who think that Satan assumed the appearance of a serpent. We cannot well say how far spiritual beings, good or bad, may have power over the material world; but we know of nothing which would warrant the idea of Satan being able so to transfigure himself, or to assume, at will, any such material form. We seem thus led to the adoption of the more common opinion, that, in some mysterious way, as in the case of possession in the time of Christ, he made use of a real animal, to what extent we

cannot say, in carrying out his seductive purpose. Unless for other allusions, as the express reference by Eve to "the serpent" as having "beguiled her," and as the like express reference to an ordinary serpent in the words of the Divine curse, we might suppose Satan directly alluded to under the name of "the serpent," not one of the race of serpents, but one whose craft or cunning as well as deadly venom made that name most appropriate. The words do not necessarily imply that he belonged to the class mentioned, "the beasts of the field." He is simply said to have possessed certain powers in a higher degree than they. However, the allusions of the subsequent context seem clearly to indicate the presence of a visible creature.

7. How this creature was used by the tempter it may be impossible to know. That he could himself imitate the human voice, or make the dumb animal speak, would seem hard to believe. In either case, he would appear able to work such a miracle as would at least tend to confirm his malignant testimony and to falsify the word of God. Nor can we suppose any such miracle wrought through any Divine aid, direct or indirect. We must not, however, because of an undoubtedly very great difficulty, put the less faith in the truth of the narrative. We certainly cannot set definite limits to spiritual agency. The many instances of possession recorded in the New Testament, which we seem bound to deem real, though most mysterious, may so far illustrate the nature and extent of that agency, though they may not provide any real key to our subject. The case of the swine, which were hurried down the steep and made to perish in the water, will at least suggest that the tempter had the power of so far ruling the instincts of the dumb creature, and may have used it to attract the eye of Eve. We shall not travel beyond the record, by making various suppositions as to how thought might be awakened by means of silent movements alone.

May we not fairly suppose, however, a combination of two things, the use of such movements in so far as they could affect the eye, and the presentation of the temptation to the mind of Eve at the same time? In her intense excitement, she might feel as if the serpent spoke to her, when the ideas or even the words here given were thus presented. The fact that a regular conversation is represented as kept up is not to be regarded as militating against this. The sacred writer may be viewed as simply giving a dramatic form to this part of his narrative. The temptation of Jesus, in some respects a counterpart of this, would seem to supply a very clear illustration. Satan is represented as coming and conversing with Him, as taking Him to the temple, and as making Him see all the kingdoms of the world. Now, we certainly need not suppose all this literally and externally done. From no mountain, however lofty, could all kingdoms be seen.

The temptation, then, may be regarded as internal. The forms under which it was presented all closely pertained to the special work of Jesus, as the delusive insinuations of the tempter all belonged to the special duty of Eve. We do not think, then, that any decided objection can be made against this view, that, whilst using the presence and the peculiar movements of the serpent in some way to affect the eye of Eve, the tempter so awakened thought within her mind, that in effect, if not in form, the conversation recorded may be said to have been carried on. At any rate, the presence of the serpent cannot be regarded as materially adding to any difficulty connected with the form of the temptation, as we can find no real difficulty due to the dramatic form in which that of Jesus is historically given.

8. However, the most essential part of our inquiry relates to the temptation itself, and not to the mere form in which it was presented. No doubt, many difficult questions are suggested by it. This paragraph, in fact, opens up a new page in the

history of the world, or rather of the moral universe. As now read and understood, it suggests another and earlier fall of holy as well as rational beings into sin and ruin. Further, it also leads us to think of all the difficulties which belong to the mighty and mysterious subject of the nature, origin, and Divine treatment of sin or moral evil. The sacred writer may have been entirely ignorant of the many points in the past and future history of creation touched by this opening statement, "And the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field," which we may regard as referring as much to the invisible agent as to the visible instrument. However, He who enabled him so to write knew the whole truth, and He has gradually opened it up, to a very limited extent, indeed, in the Old Testament, but with sufficient fulness in the New; and, we may add, perfectly independently of all the speculations and religious ideas pertaining to an Evil Principle, the idea of which some have supposed the sacred writers to have appropriated, if not directly, at least in some modified form, from a foreign source and at a much later time. We maintain the perfect independence and originality of the sacred Scriptures with regard to the whole Spirit-World, both good and evil.

9. We need not say that it has become not uncommon to treat those portions of the sacred volume which relate to evil spirits or fallen angels as, in great measure, figurative, and at least by no means to be taken historically. The very idea of the agency of such beings is certainly accompanied with difficulty. This seems to be the more deeply felt as scientific ideas take possession of the mind, and as the reign of physical law is clearly seen. However, the whole of the New Testament so resembles an exposition of this early narrative, and that viewed realistically, that we deem it utterly impossible, by any fair mode of interpretation, to set aside the idea of evil spirits. In fact, the antagonism of the Promised One to the devil is everywhere vividly and realistically described.

Many hold that we have abundant experimental evidence of the evil agency referred to. We rather think, however, that the entire subject of the spirit-world, or of holy and unholy angels, is treated most wisely when regarded as belonging to Revelation alone. The influence of spirit on spirit is such, that it may be utterly impossible to distinguish between those states of the mind which are due to its own natural working, and those which may be connected, to no small extent, with the agency of another mind. Consciousness takes note rather of those successive states than of the causes which may have given rise to them. Thus may we be very greatly influenced by agents, material and spiritual, of whose nature or very existence we may be totally ignorant. The secret and unconscious influence of spiritual beings, good or evil, might be illustrated by reference to the agency of the Holy Spirit, so clearly revealed in Scripture, and of whose reality we entertain no doubts because of unconsciousness of its influence, or inability to distinguish between the results of His operations and the workings of our own minds. In this way, whilst, from the perceived results of his agency we may not have indisputable evidence of the presence of an evil agent, we may not, from the want of such evidence, have any sufficient reason for doubting or denying his existence or influence. The testimony of Scripture will thus remain as the real and only basis of our belief. To our reference to the agency of the Holy Spirit we might have added a like reference to the being and presence of God Himself. If it be said that the Wicked one gives no token of his presence by any really perceptible manifestation of his power, the same might be said with regard to the presence of God; so that, as we do not the less firmly believe in the latter, for a like reason we may fully accept the testimony of Scripture with respect to the former.

10. In keeping with the testimony of Scripture we may say, that, in view of the vastness of Creation, reason may well con-

clude that the existence and agency of such beings as those called angels in Scripture may be regarded not only as not improbable, but even as in the highest degree probable. Why should this world alone be peopled? And why should no beings of greater power and intelligence than man have been created? Considering the antiquity of the earth, and of the universe at large, why should not such angelic beings have been introduced long before the creation of man? The existence of countless spiritual beings, whether absolutely immaterial or not, seems rather to consist with reason than the contrary. That they should have all been created, like man, in a state of perfect uprightness, appears to be also most reasonable. That they should, like him, too, have been tried or tested with respect to moral character may be easily supposed. Nor, with any colour of reason, can it be denied that many of them may have fallen from their original condition. Nay, when we consider the state of this world, if we may reason from analogy to that of other worlds, we must deem it vastly more likely that some have thus fallen than that all have retained their created perfection.

The clear testimony of Scripture as to the existence of angels, good and evil, consists with reason and observation. It may seem otherwise with the idea of their presence and agency within the bounds of this world. All the facts of observation may appear to disprove it. We might, indeed, here refer to the recorded facts of possession, involving no small amount of difficulty, as they assuredly do. However, we would rather allude to such facts as might be expected to testify clearly to the reality of the agency referred to; and we may freely admit that we may be able to adduce none which can be regarded as fully evidential. At the same time, it may be affirmed that no facts can be shown to demonstrate the contrary. We need not repeat what we have already said of the secret agency of spirit on spirit. We would rather simply refer to the existence and agency of our own minds, which are

not only invisible and beyond the sphere of sense, but of such a nature, that, however directly conscious of their powers and susceptibilities, many will not acknowledge their possession of any real or distinct spiritual existence. We might again allude to the invisible and "unsearchable" presence of God. Thoroughly, then, may spiritual beings escape all possible search.

It may be said, however, that if, on the ground of observed fact, we cannot justly deny the possible presence of such, we seem at least to have reason for denying their agency, on the ground of the apparently total absence of all such change or changes in persons affected by it as might be expected to demonstrate its reality. To this we may reply that, up to comparatively recent times, the presence and agency of electricity might have been disputed on virtually the like account. How wonderful, too, that universally diffused ethereal fluid, to which we owe the silent and mysterious transmission of light ! How great the genius of the man who first conceived or demonstrated its very existence !

Is it yet said, that the presence and agency of beings naturally connected with another world or other regions of the universe cannot well be supposed to have been Divinely intended or permitted ? Spirits, both good and evil, would seem to have to cross an impassable gulf. This world, then, cannot be a sphere of their activity. This idea, however, finds no analogical support from what we know of our world, whether through general observation or from the more exact conclusions of science. Thus the most important agent, on whose influence depends the whole economy of things, the very existence of man included, belongs not to this globe, but comes from another world ; we need not say we refer to the light and heat of the Sun. So the agency of the universal law of gravitation. So the light of the stars, viewed especially as affecting the mind of man, and thus enabling him to rise to the knowledge of the measureless creation ; in this way making him, intellectually at least, inhabit the Universe itself. Why, then,

should it not be the same with the Spiritual and Moral Universe? Why should not a real and essential unity distinguish it as well as the material creation? Why should not other moral beings be interested, and be made or permitted to take part in the affairs of mankind? Such an idea certainly cannot be proved contrary to reason. If, therefore, the Bible reveals their presence and agency, reason may at once accept, and cannot well dispute, the truth of the announcement.

Only, it may be argued, there may be something in the nature of the agency described inconsistent with all right thought of God and man, and making it impossible for us to suppose such agency employed directly by God, or even permitted with real justice or goodness towards mankind. Why, it has been often said, allow Satan to tempt and thus to destroy our race? Now, as already hinted at, in permitting the temptation God must not be supposed to have designed the fall of man. He permitted it in order to the trial of Adam, as He permitted the like temptation in order to the trial of the man Christ Jesus, and as He continues to permit temptation in order to the trial of His children in this world. The strength of the tempter or of the temptation must be great in proportion to the trial intended. Be the one or the other ever so great, it will form no adequate excuse for the commission of sin; for no temptation, however cunningly and deceitfully presented, can ever vindicate the preference of wrong to right, of sin to holiness, of obedience to disobedience to reasonable law, or of the service of the wicked one to that of the ever-blessed God, the Creator, Father, and King of man.

11. "And he said to the woman, Hath God really said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" The abruptness with which this question is introduced has suggested the idea that the beginning of this conversation has not been given. We rather think that we are to regard the entire conversation as presenting the temptation rather in real effect than in actual

form ; so that, if we are right in suggesting that the temptation was to all intents internal, this question would really be the very first insinuation of evil, leading Eve to consider the prohibition as at least somewhat strange, and not what might be expected. "Is it really true that you are not allowed the full use of the fruit of the garden? Is there, indeed, any such prohibition? Has God kept back a part? Do you say that He does not permit you to enjoy the whole? This is surely not the case. Why should anything be thus kept back? Are you not mistaken? God cannot thus refuse you any good." The subtlety of the question is amazing. For the creation of doubt no insinuation could have been more telling. With wonderful skill the evil work is thus begun. How crafty the tempter! How true to the working of human nature the whole temptation from beginning to end! The wonderful goodness of God is carefully concealed or kept in the background. The arrangement as to the garden, it is only in the gentlest possible way hinted, cannot be altogether perfect. The law of paradise cannot be so reasonable as one might look for. The mind of Eve is simply awakened to such thoughts as these. We may suppose her at first musing upon the idea as it dreamily rose up before her view.

12. "And the woman said to the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden ; but of the fruit of the tree which (is) in the midst of the garden, God hath said, You shall not eat of it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die." At first sight, this reply seems to reveal only innocence and simplicity. She appears to hold up the best shield of defence : to refer to the express command of God. She could not have given a better answer, had she simply repeated that command in the spirit of sincere assurance of its goodness, and of loyal and loving submission to its authority. However, we cannot but think the evil insinuation had so far affected her mind, and led to a reply not altogether consistent with at least that fulness

of love which ought to have ruled her heart. She speaks of being permitted to eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden—"we may eat,"—as if there were a kind of licence merely. Be this as it may, she appears unduly to extend the prohibition,—“nor shall you touch it.” This has been thought to indicate the excitement of desire. What we begin to feel as an uneasy restraint we are apt to describe in exaggerated terms. Then, again, she seems to have toned down the strong words of Divine warning and threatening,—“lest you die.” Here then does seem revealed a much feebler sense of danger on the one hand, and of the evil of transgression on the other, than would appear right or safe. We may have in these remarks to some extent overstepped the exact line of real fact. However, we seem to have at least some reason for observing generally, that the whole form and tone of this reply would suggest that the very first insinuation had not been without its evil effect.

13. “And the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die: for God knows that in the day you eat of it then your eyes will be opened, and you will be as God, knowing good and evil.” As the first words of subtle apparent inquiry show the tempter’s knowledge of the Divine prohibition, so we now find him making fearful use of the very words of God, and giving to them the form of a most emphatic denial,—“dying you shall not die.” This clear indication of knowledge would tend to give force to the temptation, as it could not fail to tell mightily on a simple and unsuspecting mind. The bolder the denial, the deeper the impression, which, if it did not startle and awaken terror, would the more certainly secure belief. In this case, it was too successful. The tempter acted, doubtless, according to his knowledge of the laws of mind. He seems to have been aware of the power of strong affirmation, calmly made, to gain credence, especially where no known facts awaken doubt. Here, however, the

fact that God had declared the contrary ought to have given rise to more than bare suspicion of intended evil. The woman should have said, Let God be true, and every one a liar who may dare to contradict Him. The simple command of her Creator and Benefactor ought to have been her all-sufficient shield. But, no. She seems to have here listened, with at least far too little feeling, to the first lie which she had ever heard. So flat a contradiction to the express word of her Bountiful Parent ought to have been received with the deepest horror.

The tempter followed up his palpable advantage. Assuring his victim of no real danger, he goes on to vindicate his assertion, by speaking as if he were the best friend of Eve, and by representing God as really no friend at all. "For God knows that in the day you (she and Adam) eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be as God, knowing good and evil." God is thus boldly denied to be the God of goodness and truth. He is in reality accused of envy; at least, of aiming, from some worthless motive, to prevent rather than to promote their real good. In this way the deceiver would, in the first place, remove all that fear which restrains from sin, and in the second, destroy all that love which constrains to obey. In destroying this love, the blow is aimed at the very life of the soul. The lie was that of a murderer, as Jesus calls him. Nay, by insinuating the idea of the direct prevention of good, he would awaken positive dislike; whilst, by setting forth that unreal good in the most attractive light, he would also awaken ambition, and impel to ruin. He speaks of the symbolic tree in such a way as to create the belief, that, from its very nature, it could secure all the knowledge which its name was made to signify. He uses the benevolent institution of God to lead away from God. So it has been with this tempter in every age.

The tempted should have simply adhered to the command and testimony of God. The fiery dart would thus have been quenched, and she would have escaped. Strange as was the

proposal to rise so high in a way so contrary to the will of God, she perceives neither its danger nor its folly. "Here it is to be remarked," says Lange, "that the hour when unbelief is born is immediately the birth-hour of superstition. The serpent would have the woman believe, that on eating that fruit she would become wonderfully enlightened, and at the same time raised to a Divine glory. And so, in like manner, is every sin a senseless and superstitious belief in the salutary effects of sin."

14. "And when the woman saw that the tree (was) good for food, and that it (was) pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make (one) wise, she took of its fruit, and ate, and gave also to her husband with her, and he ate." The deception succeeded; temptation triumphed. The woman believed the serpent rather than God. Her love to God gave way, and the love of self took its place. Her heart was perverted. She contemplated the tree as possessing manifold virtues. She saw, partly from its appearance, chiefly from what she had heard, "that it was good for food," and, as has been often said, this excited appetite, "the lust of the flesh;" that it was "pleasant to the eyes," and thus another desire arose, "the lust of the eye;" and that "the tree was desirable to make (one) wise," and this awakened a third evil principle, ambition, "the pride of life." No longer restrained by the fear of God or constrained by the love of God, this threefold cord of evil passion drew her along; and thus the first human sin was committed, "She took of the fruit, and ate."

The first woman and mother of all has thus sinned and thus fallen. She has ceased to be what God made her. She has lost her spiritual life and her Divine goodness and beauty. She is no longer the lovely child of God or the true help of man. At first, we may suppose, she would not be aware of her loss or of her fall. For a time the delusion may have continued. The fruit may have been sweet to the taste, far more

so than she may have expected. The tree may have still seemed beautiful and precious in her sight. The grand result, for which she had been delusively taught to look, she may have still held in surest prospect.

All this, with a wish like that of transgressors to escape the displeasure of those who have not as yet transgressed, may have powerfully influenced her mind, converting the tempted into a tempter, and leading her to do what she could, at least to do all that was needed, to constrain her husband to follow her sad example : "she gave also to her husband with her." We feel assured that Adam was not present during the temptation. "He was not deceived, but the woman." He may have soon after come to the spot, or met her elsewhere. How far she made use of reasoning and persuasion we are not informed. She gave, and they joined in eating and sinning.

Many conjectures have been made as to the motive or motives by which he was led to yield. "In the very moments of the temptation," says Lange, "as we must take the account, there comes in the perception of the fact that she does not die from the eating ; and so it is that the wife's power of persuasion, and Adam's sympathy with her, are not made specially prominent." We might suppose that she would reason with him, as the serpent had reasoned with her. However, this would suggest that he also was deceived. So far she may have removed all fear, if the fact that she still lived did not of itself do so. The circumstances that we are told simply of her giving and of his taking, that he afterwards merely says that such was the case, and that God, in keeping with this, declares, "Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife," etc., would seem to suggest the inference that the husband was very greatly influenced by his wife alone. He was loving, she was loved. In his love lay her power. The mere words of persuasion were the less needed. We might say more as to the suddenness of the temptation. His reference to the fact that she had been given by God, suggests the idea of that

confidence which he would the more naturally repose in her, and of that undoubtedly greater influence which she would exert over him.

The tempter perceived the difference between the two beings with whom he wished to deal. He knew the influence of heart on heart. He began where he expected to be most successful. He may have tempted Eve to tempt her husband. As she ought not to have yielded to the seduction of the tempter, he ought not to have yielded to the persuasion of his wife. Here we seem to find an example of the real nature and spirit of all idolatry, the worship of the creature rather than of the Creator. He followed her example. He yielded to her will. "He ate." The sin is committed; the contest is over; the victory is lost. The kingly and queenly crown has fallen. The glory of Eden has departed. Immortal blessedness is forfeited; sin has prevailed; Satan has triumphed; the Probation is ended; only Divine Mercy and Grace can now avail.

15. "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they (were) naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves girdles." Such is said to have been the effect of the first transgression. In some sense the assertion of the tempter would seem true. However, this opening of the eyes was not that which was anticipated. It was to their shame. "They knew that they were naked." They had received a terrible accession to their knowledge of good and evil. They had not been raised nearer to God. The experience of present evil would contrast sadly with that of past good. They would not now think their former lot hard or the law of paradise severe. The whole garden was before them. All blessings were theirs. Their Divine Father was worthy of all confidence. Only one Tree was held in reserve by the Owner of all. That was emphatically His. It was in no sense theirs; only, indeed, it was planted for their

good as truly as was any other. It was provided for their spiritual and moral instruction. Reason can suggest no arrangement more equal or just, no test of allegiance more simple or fair. This Tree, in fact, may be regarded as the symbol of the normal Divine treatment of moral agents of every description. As already said, it is the symbol of Law, without which there can be no knowledge of sin or of the opposite of sin, no moral action, no moral government, no essential distinction between man and beast. The garden would have been imperfect without the symbol, as all society would be imperfect without the reality. As they looked upon that symbol, and as they thought of the Divine prohibition, the idea of good would take more or less full possession of their minds. When they violated the Will of God, they knew that they had done wrong; they were ashamed of themselves. "They saw that they were naked." Though the tree was symbolical, we need not go so far as to say that the fruit had no peculiar virtue. For aught we know, it may have had some such effect as that of which we are told in the instance of Jonathan and the honey. All must be conjecture. One thing is certain; the real power lay in the fact that it was forbidden. The thought of God was now a source of shame and dread. They had now something to conceal. Conscience would keep their sin before their eyes. They would see a fearful change in their own countenances. The earth would seem changed. The one sad act had affected their whole nature, spiritual, moral, mental, and even physical. A mighty change was effected before the external sin could have been committed, and as soon as the temptation was really entertained.

The offence may appear insignificant. It has frequently been treated without seriousness, and with not a little contempt. The idea of such momentous consequences flowing from so small a cause has been often ridiculed. But, before it could have been realised, their entire views of God must

have been altered ; they must have ceased to regard Him as their loving Father and best Friend ; they must have become ungrateful for all His gifts ; they must have believed Him capable of denying them true happiness ; they must have set aside His rightful authority ; they must have preferred their own will to His ; they must have allowed selfishness to usurp the place of Divine love ; they must have become “ gods ” to themselves ; their whole inner nature must have been perverted. How fearful, then, the evil implied in what has been deemed but a little sin ! In fact, if the thing prohibited be great, then the greatness of the sin may be measured by the greatness of the evil done. If small, then the motive to do wrong being small, how great the sin of yielding to such a motive ! This ought to suffice in reply to those who would treat the guilty act as trivial. At the same time, the real aim of the transgressors was by no means insignificant. They aimed at a higher than their rightful rank. They were prepared to dethrone God, that they might, in some sense, be equal to Him, and be free from His authority. In every way the first sin must be regarded as great beyond our comprehension, just as great as He, Who knew the nature and obligations of beings so wonderfully constituted, and so highly exalted in relation to Himself, declared by the annexed penalty, and would now, by the varied intimations of Scripture, lead us to believe.

16. Here it may be well to illustrate the nature and greatness of this first and seemingly insignificant act of transgression, by referring to a principle of great importance and far-reaching application, laid down by a New Testament author : (Jas. ii. 10) “ Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” The Divine law may be considered in three respects ; with regard to its authority, the Authority of God ; with regard to its rule of duty, the Will of God ; and with regard to its principle of obedience, Supreme

Love to God. Suppose, by way of illustration, we take the Ten Commandments as summing up the law in question. The man, who keeps nine and yet breaks the tenth, is here said to be guilty, not of one merely, but of the entire ten. How, it may be asked, can this possibly be?

Let us look at the one Authority on which they are based. He who breaks one precept sets aside the authority on which that precept is founded ; but, in setting aside this authority in one instance, or as to one part of the one law, he denies the same authority as to every other part, and therefore as to the whole ; He sets aside the authority on which the whole rests, and, accordingly, sets aside the whole law which rests upon it : "he is guilty of all."

Again, let us view the ten commandments as the Revealed Will of God. In this case, a man may choose to obey nine and refuse to obey one. How, it may be said, can this imply disobedience to all the ten ? Let us simply ask, Why does he refuse to obey one ? Clearly because, in that one case at least, he prefers his own will to the Will of God. But, why does he obey the remaining nine ? Because he prefers the Will of God to his own ? Certainly not ; for, if he so preferred the Will of God to his own, he would assuredly have also obeyed or preferred that Will in the case of the remaining one. There must, then, be some reason for the great apparent difference of choice. In the exceptional instance, the Will of God did not fall in with his own will, and thus he disobeyed. In the other instances, the Will of God did fall in with his own will, and consequently he obeyed. Hence, he disobeyed the one because discordant with his own will, and he obeyed the nine because accordant with it ; in fact, acted according to his own will with respect to the whole ten, and thus violated all by choosing to do the Will of God, seemingly as God's, but really as his own, in the case of nine : "he is guilty of all."

Once more, let us consider the principle of obedience, Supreme Love to God. He disobeys one, why ? Because he

prefers himself to God or loves himself more than God. Self is supreme ; God is subordinate. But if he thus acts from supreme self-love in the one case, he cannot but act from the same supreme self-love in any other case. In heart or in spirit he violates every precept ; " he is guilty of all."

Let us apply this grand principle to the first transgression. Let it be externally ever so small, it could not possibly be committed without the subversion of the entire Authority of the Lawgiver, without the preference of self-will to the Will of the Creator and King, or without the change of the Supreme Love of God into the supreme love of self, or the deification of self at the expense of the dethronement of God.

17. We may here close by noticing a very strange view which some have taken of the fearful result of the temptation here recorded. Because Satan triumphed, his power has been compared with that of God, and the sacred Scriptures have been represented as so far from being inspired or worthy of credence, that they would lead us to infer that the Evil spirit was really a mightier being than even the great Creator, the Eternal God. Why should the Father and Guardian of primitive man allow any being whatever to destroy His own beloved children? How often has the temptation been thus contemplated, or, we may say, thus misconceived and misrepresented ! How strange that even men of science and philosophy should have betrayed so vast an amount of ignorance on this subject ! What confusion of ideas has thus been revealed ! If the contest had been purely physical, if Satan had been set forth as measuring his mere strength with that of God, the issue would have been infallibly the reverse. However, the contest was of a totally different nature. It was purely moral. God had set before the minds of the tempted ones such motives as should have led them with perfect ease and with the fullest certainty to have baffled every attempt to overthrow their integrity or to seduce their hearts from the sincerest love and

the most unswerving fidelity. He had done all that was right and proper towards beings endowed with a perfect moral nature, endowed with a perfectly free, yet most mysterious, will. They possessed all-sufficient moral power. Physically they were absolutely beyond the reach of the Evil one. He could, by no possibility, do more than present motives of an opposite nature ; with their perfect freedom of choice and action he could not interfere.

Further, he could not possibly present stronger motives for disobedience than God had presented for continued and perfect obedience. "They were not tempted beyond what they were able to bear." God was near to help. They could, then, have stood. They could, if they would, and only if they would, fall. As a matter of pure and free and therefore most simple choice, they yielded to the inferior and the most unrighteous motives, and accordingly fell. Physically, Satan was less powerful than God. Morally, the truth of God ought to have been more mighty than the falsehood of Satan. Freely, unreasonably, wickedly, they made the wrong choice. The guilt was on their own heads. Satan was, indeed, guilty in seeking their destruction ; still, the guilt was not the less truly, we repeat, on their own heads.

As to the power of Satan, it was that of spiritual delusion, and not that of physical might. A mere child may present such a motive to his parent's mind as may seduce from the path of uprightness and lead to a very great crime. God was no less the Father and Guardian of the parent. Shall we, then, say that the child was stronger than God ? We think we have said more than enough on this subject.

Let us never forget that the Creation of a Moral Being is the highest work of the great Creator on the one hand, and that the possibility of falling as well as of standing is an essential characteristic of the possession of a moral nature on the other. Sin will ever remain a mystery, as the Will, whence it proceeds, must ever be a mystery. If God gives sufficient Will and suffi-

cient motive to enable the moral agent to retain his uprightness, he and he alone must be ultimately condemned if a wrong choice be made, and we must not lay the evil deed at the door of the All-perfect and All-wise Creator, because we cannot resolve this Mystery of Moral Agency, this Mystery of a Free Moral Will.

II.

“And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day : and the man and his wife hid themselves from the face of Jehovah God among the trees of the garden. And Jehovah God called the man, and said to him, Where (art) thou ? And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I (was) naked ; and I hid myself. And He said, Who told thee that thou (art) naked ? Hast thou eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat ? And the man said, The woman whom Thou gavest (to be) with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate. And Jehovah God said to the woman, What is this (that) thou hast done ? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I ate.”

1. “And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day : and the man and his wife hid themselves from the face of Jehovah God among the trees of the garden.” It is usually supposed that the time here alluded to was the evening of the day on which the sad transgression was committed. To this no great objection can be made ; only, all must be pure conjecture ; a longer period may have been allowed for reflection. Doubtless all was done in wisdom and for their good. The season naturally awakening thoughtfulness, and leading to tenderest meditation, the calm quiet evening, is selected for this solemn Divine visit, the first really felt to be unsought and unwelcome. The fallen ones may have as yet remained so far under the delusive influence as at least to have had no real fear of the execution of the threatened penalty. The voice of God awakens alarm. God appears no longer their Friend. Sin has parted between Him

and them. They seek some place of concealment. Such is the sad and terrible fruit of transgression.

2. "And Jehovah God called the man, and said to him, Where (art) thou? And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I (was) naked; and I hid myself." Adam, for the first time, required thus to be called. The call may have been gentle, as if nothing had occurred; or, it may have been with such authority as could not be resisted, and as would tend to awaken the consciousness of guilt. Whatever they now felt, they were in the most awful position. They were now guilty of death. Nothing short of the most stupendous work of mercy could possibly save them. They have violated the Law of Paradise. We may say, their day of judgment has come. Their Father and King has come to be their Judge. This call of God is a summons to appear at the bar of His Judgment-seat. At present we simply note this fact.

3. "And He said, Who told thee that thou (art) naked? Hast thou eaten of the Tree of which I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" The question is asked, Why this change of feeling? Whence this sense of nakedness and shame? It must have some peculiar source, not to be found in thyself as thou wast formed or as thou wert wont to be. Then the effect is traced to its proper cause. The fruit of the tree had given new knowledge to the man. His words had indicated a new mode of feeling, a self-consciousness never before possessed, a guilty knowledge of himself and of good and evil. In the sad sense already referred to, his eyes had been opened. Then the question is plainly put, "Hast thou eaten of the Tree?" The Judge here virtually asks, "Guilty, or not guilty?"

4. "And the man said, The woman whom Thou gavest (to be) with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." Whatever

the spirit of the culprit, here is at least a full confession of the fact. Adam, then, thus far pleads guilty. Before such a Judge denial was vain. Still, there seems no deep sense of guilt, no expression of contrition, no manifestation of repentance. He would rather throw all blame off himself, and cast it upon another. Nay, he would still further palliate the offence by connecting it indirectly with God Himself. "The woman whom Thou gavest," etc. How much does this teach concerning the nature and perverting power of sin! Here we find the very heart of every man, and not of the first man alone, exposed to view. It separates between God and man, between man and man, between husband and wife. In this dark picture we have no mere fancy work; all is truth-like. All is true, true to Adam, true to every man, true to human nature itself. Let us here simply add, that Adam acknowledges the deed, that he shows no repentance, and that it would not be in keeping with the true knowledge of human nature yet to expect it. Only the knowledge of Divine Mercy can lead to repentance. We find here accordingly precisely what the knowledge of our own hearts, the knowledge of human nature, would teach us to expect.

5. "And Jehovah God said to the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I ate." God speaks as if Adam had thus far spoken the truth. He asks what fearful thing she, whom He had given to Adam to be a source of good, and who was herself surrounded with good, had done. In her reply we find the same spirit as that of Adam clearly indicated. The fact is confessed. Thus far Eve pleads guilty. Still she blames another rather than takes real blame to herself. Besides, she passes over the fact of her further guilt, that alluded to in the words of her husband, the guilt of tempting him to sin as she had sinned. Thus in neither case do we find any real mark of genuine repentance. However guilty both husband and wife

must be held to be, and however true it is that temptation does not defend from the fair and full charge of guilt, yet this does not render the wickedness of the tempter the less real or his guilt the less great. Here then, we may add, the whole evil is traced to the cruel deed of the Evil one. However guilty they in yielding to his temptation, he thus stands charged with the terrible crime of tempting them and of thus seeking their destruction. Hence the Divine words which immediately follow.

III.

“And Jehovah God said to the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou (shalt be) cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field ; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life : and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed ; He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.”

1. As already hinted at, these words appear to prove the presence of a literal serpent. The real agent must simply be supposed to have been addressed as if identical with the inferior creature of which he made malicious use. By keeping this in view we easily escape all difficulties due to the peculiar terms in which the Divine curse is here expressed. That curse may seem to fall upon the innocent creature alone. In some mere meaningless legend, we might suppose an ignorant and superstitious writer unduly to raise an irrational animal far above its peculiar sphere. For the author of the story of Eden to have done so is simply impossible. The just assumption of the fact of inspiration at once accounts for the early allusions to the invisible Spirit of evil, and solves every real difficulty in relation of the words here addressed apparently to the serpent, but really to Satan, who could not fail to understand them or to take them directly to himself. Unless a new and full revelation had been made to our first parents concerning the tempter, we do not see how the Divine words could have been

well addressed to him unless under the form which he had virtually assumed.

2. "Because thou hast done this, thou (shalt be) cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field." The serpent or Satan is at once addressed as guilty. No question is asked; he is treated according to his deserts. Of course, if the irresponsible animal had been really intended, no Divine curse, no expression of desert of any kind, could have been possibly pronounced. There seems to be a reference to that antipathy to the serpent species which has been often referred to by expositors, and which all appear to regard as instinctive and universal. Just as the literal serpent is thus shunned and hated, so would Satan be ever regarded as worthy of all opposition and dislike. The curse of God would ever rest upon him. No mercy is so much as hinted at with regard to this great and terrible destroyer of the beautiful and precious work of God.

3. "Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." Here Satan is still addressed as if identical with the serpent. Some have supposed that this was a peculiar serpent or kind of serpent, and that the effect of the Divine curse involved a marked and miraculous work of physical change and degradation. However, we seem not to have a shadow of reason for such a supposition. Serpents existed long before man was formed, and possessed the same characteristics as those of the present day. Besides, the supposition proceeds on the absurd idea of ill-desert on the part of an irrational animal. The words, indeed, may seem to suggest the idea of a real change; however, they should rather be regarded as allusively symbolical of the punishment of the real agent. Thus we find words afterwards used of the rainbow which would seem to imply that it had never appeared in the sky before the time of the deluge: "I do set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token," etc. However, that bow

had doubtless been "set in the cloud" previously, and as often as the physical conditions occurred; but it had never been before so set as the Divinely appointed Token of the covenant spoken of. So here the serpent would continue to be what it ever had been, but would for the first time and ever after have the form and appear the degraded creature alluded to as fitly symbolical of the degraded character and miserable condition of him who appeared as a serpent and who would be called by the name of the Serpent to the end of time.

By way of illustrating the principle on which Satan is here addressed in terms applicable to the serpent alone, we might again refer to the words of Jesus, in which He seems to speak of the temple just purified, when He meant to refer exclusively to His Own bodily frame. However, we need not multiply illustrations. The serpent will ever remain the symbol of Satan. The character, degradation, and doom of the latter are thus here clearly and powerfully set forth, and we would only add that all is in perfect keeping with every other allusion to this fearful Being in other and subsequent parts of Scripture.

4. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel." Instead of proceeding at once to treat of these pregnant clauses, we may here pause and make the following remarks:—

(a.) Let us now keep in view what we have already observed, that the Divine procedure here related is really that of a Day of Judgment, justly so called,—the Judgment of the Primitive or Paradisaic World. Three moral agents are concerned,—the one tempter, and the two tempted and fallen ones. The Law of Paradise has been broken. The penalty of that law has been incurred. The transgressors have confessed their guilt. The Divine Judge now brings to a final termination the Paradisaic Economy by pronouncing His righteous sentence, as many would say, but, as we would rather

express it, by indicating His future treatment of both tempter and tempted. The force of this will be seen as we proceed.

(b.) The Divine words just considered express, as we have said, the doom of the being here and elsewhere called the Serpent. To him no mercy is indicated. However guilty the tempted, their terrible fall is traced to his fearful malignity and deceit. Adam had accused Eve of tempting him, as Eve accused the serpent of deceiving her. The evil was thus traced to its origin. The Judge accordingly addresses, *first*, the serpent; *next*, the woman; and *lastly*, the man. As to the Wicked one, here so obscurely introduced, subsequent Scripture clearly shows that this was not the first sentence of condemnation passed upon him. He had been condemned, we cannot tell how long before, as guilty of violating the law of heaven, and so had been banished from his first and heavenly abode. Here he is condemned a second time as guilty of tempting and destroying the first parents of the human race. Here, further, he is represented as the great foe of the human family, the great enemy of human redemption; and so, we may add, as destined to receive another and most terrible sentence of condemnation, when his permitted work of malignant antagonism to the Redeemer, here promised and here so far described, has come to an end.

(c.) We have more than once referred to the absurdity of supposing a mere irrational creature to have been here intended. In passing, we would simply refer to the decisive proof, to which we have already alluded, furnished by the words before us. The serpent is spoken of as the antagonist, not of Adam and Eve only, but of the promised Seed of the latter. That Promised One, come when He may, is to crush or bruise the head, not of the seed or brood of this serpent or of serpents generally, but of this very Serpent himself; whilst this same Serpent, and not any one of his brood, is to bruise or crush the Promised Deliverer's heel. All Scripture agrees with this. We have said perhaps more than enough in proof. Let it,

then, be simply and finally observed, that, after pronouncing the Serpent's doom, the Divine Judge goes on to show that the tempter would continue to be the great enemy of God and man.

• (*d.*) In so representing him, the same Divine Judge assumes the character and attitude of a Friend of the fallen, the Fountain of grace and mercy, the almighty and sovereign Redeemer of the human race. It has been often said that the loving and compassionate Father, before uttering one word of severity, thus kindly and tenderly encourages hope. We have no doubt that it was inconceivably pleasing to the Divine Paternal Heart thus to utter these words of mercy and comfort. Still, we must not overlook the fact that the order of the Divine procedure was simply the order of real propriety. It was really proper that the new Economy of Salvation should be alluded to, if not fully described, before the position and treatment of the transgressors about to be placed under that economy should be spoken of. Hence the order referred to. Careful attention to this will enable us to appreciate more correctly the real force of the words afterwards addressed to the parents of our race. These words have very often been understood to convey the Divine sentence of condemnation as simply and directly required by the threatening of the Paraisaïc law.

It would be hard to conceive a greater mistake. If that threatening had been executed, or if Adam and Eve had been condemned to suffer the penalty threatened, no economy of mercy could have been introduced, no hope of salvation could have been inspired. Instead of being told that, as they have sinned, they must suffer as the law violated had declared, they are virtually informed of all but the reverse. They are assured that, in the exercise of His grand Prerogative of Mercy, their Father-King has provided a remedy. Expressly it is said that the woman shall be changed in heart. As expressly is it declared that a great Deliverer shall arise, the successful Antago-

nist of the fell destroyer. We repeat then, that the institution of a new order of things is thus clearly indicated, expressive of saving mercy on the one hand, and under which the Family, as well as the Parents, of mankind are to be placed on the other. The Divine words which follow, therefore, instead of dooming the tempted to suffer the penalty of the Paradisaic Law, briefly but powerfully describe a part, and only a part, of their future treatment, as sinners certainly, yet as sinners placed under the grand and precious Remedial System of Grace and Mercy. We might extend these remarks; we might illustrate what we thus suggest. Our meaning will more clearly appear as we go on to treat the entire passage.

5. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman." It might be asked, Why the woman rather than the man? The more common idea is, that the reference to the former prepares the way for what follows as to the Promised Deliverer, and, as is generally supposed, to His miraculous birth as the Son of a Virgin-mother. Whatever view we may take with respect to this, we must not overlook an important reason which the narrative itself appears naturally to suggest. We mean the fact that the sad transgression, with all its fearful consequences, was traceable to the deceitful friendship of the serpent on the one hand, and the mistaken confidence of the woman on the other. The woman, and not the man, had been directly tempted by the Wicked one.

The first utterance of Divine grace not unfitly takes a form in keeping with this fact. Satan had triumphed through apparently friendly association with the woman. He is told that enmity would be put between them; that he would not finally destroy her loving trust in God or faithful obedience to Him. Of this enmity the instinctive hatred of the serpent tribes may be a striking symbol, but cannot be the real enmity intended.

The meaning of the words must be deeper and vastly more important than some will allow. To put enmity between any

one and Satan must imply a very decisive work. In the case of every sinner, such as Eve then was, the greatest moral and spiritual change must be effected. Between the sinner and Satan there must remain no real common sympathy. The character and conduct of the former, especially in relation to God, must cease to resemble those of the latter. Enmity to God must be destroyed. Love to God must be restored. The spirit and character must thus be essentially changed or renewed.

The Divine words thus assuredly and most happily imply,—*First*, that God would deliver Eve from evil and from the power of the tempter, and thus, in fact, introduce the work of grace or of human redemption; and, *secondly*, as the words now used imply, the precious and pleasing fact that the first transgressor, “the mother of all living,” would herself be actually saved. All her children, we need hardly say, may well rejoice in the assurance thus Divinely granted—an assurance which well consists with the manifest faith and piety expressed at the birth of Cain, however mistaken she may then have been as to his future career. Here, then, is comfort for Eve, and doubtless for Adam also, before any sentence of condemnation is uttered, and implying, as we have already seen, that the full literal penalty would not be executed, or that abundant mercy was in store for the first transgressor.

6. “And between thy seed and her Seed.” Many would understand this merely of the brood of the natural serpent on the one hand, and of the children of Eve or the whole human race on the other. We may accept this as a part of the truth, or, more correctly, as the symbol of the real truth. Applying the words as we must to Satan, we must look for a very different interpretation. The enmity between his seed and her seed must be essentially the same as that between him and her; and must therefore imply the same distinctive spirit, character, and conduct. For the seed of Satan we must look

to those whose character and conduct are hostile to God and to the Divine law and government. For the seed of the woman we must in like manner look to those whose character and conduct are the reverse, or are in harmony with God, His law and government. All who resemble Satan in these respects are his seed, his children. All who are like Eve, thus converted and changed, are her seed, her children. Hence the two great classes of all ages, the converted and unconverted, the Church and the world, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan.

This distinction is clearly indicated in other parts of Scripture, especially in the New Testament, where the wicked or the impenitent or unconverted are expressly called "the children of the devil"; nay, in so calling them, Jesus Himself, the special Seed of the woman here referred to, alludes to this very portion of Scripture, and speaks of him "who was a murderer from the beginning." But whilst Jesus is emphatically the Seed of the woman, all who resemble her in renewed character must be regarded as included under the same name.

If it had been fully kept in view that the woman here alluded to is spoken of, not as she was when seduced by Satan, but as she was to become when changed in heart, there would have been no real difficulty in determining the true import of the expression, "the seed of the woman." The opinion of some of the ablest and most learned interpreters would never have been entertained, that that expression referred to the whole natural descendants of Eve, the entire human family. The two seeds must be contrasted. When we set aside the idea of the brood of serpents, that of this special serpent or of Satan can be no other than those who remain under his seductive power. Accordingly, that of the woman must include all those who resemble her in her renewed character and spirit.

We need not say that this consists with the general scope of Scripture. Thus the Apostle Peter speaks of Christian women as "daughters of Sara as long as ye do well," etc., that is to

say, whilst they resembled the wife of Abraham in spirit and conduct. However, the best illustration is furnished by the author of this narrative himself, who in this very Book of Genesis records the history of the 'father of the faithful,' "in whom and in whose seed the nations of the earth were to be blessed," words which, while referring to his natural descendants, allude especially, as in the case before us, *first*, to the promised Deliverer, and, *secondly*, to those resembling Abraham in faith. As all thus resembling him are called his seed, so all resembling Eve in that love to God which creates hatred of evil are called her seed. In this way we have thus early a most wonderful miniature photograph of the human family from first to last, we may say of the two great standing hostile camps whose history forms the moral and spiritual history of mankind. All is true to human nature and to undeniable fact. We have here set forth the reign of sin and the reign of grace from the beginning to the end of time.

We need hardly add that the enmity spoken of is perfectly consistent with that deep compassion and love which the renewed in heart and life possess, and are Divinely taught to cherish and to exercise towards the rest of mankind; nay, with the great fact that on the side of the seed of the woman, the grand end of the conflict is not to injure and destroy, but to convert and save those to whose spirit and conduct their own are here declared to be essentially opposed.

7. "He shall bruise thy head." Here the analogy is still kept up. The human foe of the natural serpent seeks to bruise or to crush the hated creature's head, and so to deprive him of all power to injure or so to gain the victory over him. Beyond this we need not go in the interpretation of these words. The Seed of the woman would finally overcome the deceptive and wicked antagonist really intended. Without symbolical allusion, the Promised One would finally and perfectly triumph over Satan, the seducer of mankind. We may observe in passing that the

masculine form, "He," is here strikingly employed, and not the neuter, "it," as in our English version. One special Being seems thus undoubtedly referred to, the true Antagonist of Satan, the blessed Saviour of the world. So we have been ever accustomed to think. Such has been the view taken by the ablest and best interpreters. Yet an apparently very strong objection has been urged against it. We may present it in the words of one who justly ranks amongst the very ablest and best. We refer to Calvin, who says: "There is indeed no ambiguity of the words here used by Moses, but I do not agree with others as to the *meaning*; for other interpreters take the seed for *Christ* without controversy; as if it were said that some one would arise from the seed of the woman who should wound the serpent's head. Gladly would I give my suffrage in support of their opinion, but that I regard the word seed as too violently distorted by them; for who will concede that a *collective* noun is to be understood of one man *only*? Further, as the perpetuity of the contest is noted, so victory is promised to the human race through a continual succession of ages. I explain, therefore, the *seed* to mean the posterity generally. But since experience teaches that not all the sons of Adam so far arise as conquerors of the devil, we must necessarily come to one head, that we may find to whom the victory belongs. St. Paul, from the seed of Abraham, leads us to Christ, because many were degenerate sons, and a considerable part adulterous, through infidelity; whence it follows that the unity of the body flows from the head. Wherefore the sense will be (in my judgment) that the human race, which Satan was endeavouring to oppress, would at length be victorious."

On these acute reasonings of the great reformer we may best serve our purpose and set forth our view of the subject by making the following observations:—

(a.) We think Calvin errs, with many others, in regarding "the seed of the woman" as the entire human race. Hence

he is constrained to acknowledge that "the sons of Adam" generally are not conquerors of the enemy. As we have already hinted at, if we do not divide the human race into two conflicting parties, where shall we find "the seed of the serpent," "the children of the devil," at all?

(*b.*) Though the main strength of Calvin's criticism lies in the apparent inconsistency of using the term "seed" in the one clause *collectively* of the whole number of the saved, and in the other *personally* of the one Almighty Saviour, we find him obliged to interpret, at least so far on the very principle on which he rejects the more common interpretation. As he says, "the unity of the body flows from the head." Now, as we may see, if he had made due use of this principle, and proper use of the case of Abraham, we think he might have succeeded in removing the difficulty which he treats as insuperable.

(*c.*) Calvin is undoubtedly correct in saying that none "will concede that a *collective* noun is to be understood of one man *only*," provided that one is to be regarded as a mere unit of the collective whole. His argument is thus perfect, unless we can find some real and important principle on which the *one* can be identified with the *whole*, or, if we may so say, the *whole* may be summed up in the *one*. Now,—

(*d.*) This is just what we find in the most remarkable case in hand. "The seed of the woman" is just such as we may truly contemplate, under one aspect, as an innumerable People, and, under another, as one glorious Person,—He the head, they the body,—He and they mystically and most truly one,—He and they being often identified by Himself and in various parts of Scripture.

The oneness of His people with Himself is alluded to and illustrated by Himself in a most striking and touching manner. We may refer to only two examples. In His wonderful intercessory prayer He speaks of having given to them the glory which the Father had given to Him—that of being *one* with Himself and *one* with God. Again, when acting as universal

Judge, He assures us that He will treat all kindness shown to His people as kindness shown to Himself, and that He will treat all as having neglected Himself who have treated His people with neglect.

We might allude to the Apostle Paul's beautiful similitude of the human body and its many members. "As," says he, "the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ," as if Christ were not only the head, but also the whole spiritual body; all His people, as we have said, being summed up in Him. In fact, it is just as He is in them and they in Him, or as they are thus, in one sense, many, and in another sense, one, that they are His, or that they are "the seed of the woman" at all. However, we would now refer to an express example of the very usage before us. We allude to the case of Abraham and his seed. We shall not treat of the various meanings of the expression, "seed of Abraham." We may say, that it is undoubtedly used of those who resemble him in faith on the one hand, and of the great promised Deliverer on the other. Now, when it was said "in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," whatever more, the words assuredly allude to those who resemble Abraham on the one hand, and to the Promised Messiah on the other, the word Seed being thus used as well in a collective as in a singular sense.

(e.) Hence, we think, we may now justly infer that in the clause before us the great Deliverer is undoubtedly intended. He is emphatically that One by whom the Serpent's head was, to be crushed, the power of the triumphant Tempter was to be ultimately and absolutely overthrown. To illustrate this would be to treat of the entire mission and history of Jesus Christ. We might refer to the words of Jesus, uttered in prospect of the Cross, or of what might have seemed the victory of Satan: "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. This He said," says John,

“signifying by what death He should die.” In keeping with this, we have a fine utterance of inspiration,—“Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same ; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death ; that is, the devil ; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” So much for one way in which the Promised One would triumph over this mighty foe.

But we need not say that He has been carrying on the mighty warfare of good against evil from age to age,—that the seed of the woman has thus been multiplying as He has been attracting heart after heart to Himself, and as He has been extending His kingdom by leading men to unite themselves to Him and to enjoy the blessedness of having Him for their real life and power. As Satan’s great evil work was that of destroying faith in the love of the God and Father of our first parents, the great good work of this mighty Deliverer is that of restoring faith in that Divine love, and thus of renewing the true and devoted love of man to God.

The world of mankind is yet far from being renewed. Still, the work of renovation advances, nor, we may be fully assured, will it cease, vast as may be the obstacles, till the race has been recovered, and till the head of the old serpent has been crushed. All this implies the very identity of the Promised One with His numerous people. He does not work alone and apart from them. Just as He dwells in their hearts and makes them one with Himself, He gives them power to overcome their old and standing enemy. In and through them, as well as by Himself, He gains victory after victory. Hence the apostolic reference to this very passage,—“The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.” The work of the Saviour is thus ascribed to the saint ; and why ? Simply because, as in the first promise, the Saviour and the saint are regarded as One.

“And thou shalt bruise His heel.” The triumphant De-

liverer, "the Seed of the woman," was not to escape all harm. In the terrible and long continued strife suffering would assuredly be endured. Here the reference is still to the manner of the contest between mankind and the whole serpent species. There is the blow on the head, on one side ; and there is the bite of the heel or lower part of the body, on the other. In our interpretation we must not go beyond the general analogy thus suggested. The Serpent and his brood had their modes of fighting, or of doing injury to the Redeemer and His redeemed people. History alone can enable us to understand the mighty and long-continued spiritual conflict. Every clause of this Divine sentence is full of meaning, and gives brief expression to countless and infinitely diversified scenes and events in the history of the world. Here, the words express the intensity of the hatred and the vehemence of opposition displayed by the tempter towards all pertaining to the work of human recovery. We shall add no more. As already said, history alone can illustrate the meaning of this as of every other clause, of this true and wonderful saying of the blessed and merciful God.

IV.

"To the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception ; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children ; and thy desire (shall be) to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

i. We have already remarked that these words refer to only a part of the Divine treatment of the first transgression ; we mean of course, the darker and severer part. The other portion is included in what we have been just considering, namely, the marvellously merciful and gracious Economy of Redemption, under which, by the words addressed to the tempter, the woman had been virtually or practically placed. This, we think, has been very frequently over-looked. The evils here alluded to cannot by any means be regarded as equivalent to the penalty of the Paradisaic Law. Of course if that law had not been broken,

these evils would not have been endured. Still, we must keep fully in view the simple and important fact, that they, however thus originating, form part of the New and Redemptive Economy. They infallibly declare her to be under sin, as the happier part of the Divine treatment as certainly declares her to be under grace. To this we shall more fully allude again, when we come to treat of the words addressed to the man.

2. Eve had been assured of salvation through the redemptive agency of One descended from herself. She is now informed that, in being constituted a mother, she would be exposed to sufferings and sorrows which, in a state of innocence, would not or could not have fallen to her lot. Of course, she was not the only woman here intended. The words relate to future generations as well as to her. They need not be taken exclusively in their literal sense; but may be viewed as also suggestive of all the trials, cares, toils, and sorrows connected with the relation of motherhood in a sinful and suffering world. At the same time, we must not overlook, what has not been always remembered, that these and all the evils thus due to sin and here alluded to are not to be regarded as incapable of mitigation through the influence of Divine grace, by which human character would assuredly be elevated, and the circumstances and condition of the subjects of it raised.

3. So with respect to what is said of her conjugal relationship. Sin would introduce many and great evils; still, evils which would be vastly lessened by the operations of Divine grace. The clause, "thy desire shall be to thy husband," may be rendered, "shall be subject to thy husband." She had fallen through neglect of her true relation to him,—at least, she had abused her influence by wielding it to the fearful injury of her husband; and now she seems to be informed that sin would not improve her conjugal lot, but that selfishness would too often take the place of affection, and domestic tyranny be no uncommon result. Though the words of them-

selves might be interpreted on the simple principle that the wife would henceforth occupy the inferior place in the domestic economy, and be led to yield to the domestic rule of the husband, the fact, that the evils which would flow from the recent transgression seem here specially intended, would suggest the idea of the degrading condition to which woman would be reduced, so sadly in keeping with universal history.

Here again we may say that Divine grace would not fail to enter the family circle, to sanctify every relation, and to remove the manifold evils due to sin. We may here observe, that a like expression is used with respect to the sons of Eve, Cain and Abel: "Unto thee (subject to thee) shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him," referring, doubtless, to the law of fraternal priority or birth-right superiority. This would rather suggest the idea that, within the domestic circle, that relative position, which Eve had forgotten, would be really maintained. Still, as said, the evils due to sin seem specially intended; and therefore we cannot but regard the Divine words as alluding to the hard lot of which the history of every age and country, in so far as Redemptive grace has been unknown, is an infinitely diversified illustration. Let the condition of woman in Christian and in other lands be pondered, and the real fruits of sin on the one hand, and of grace on the other, will not fail to appear.

V.

"And to the man He said, Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed (shall be) the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat (of) it all the days of thy life; and thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou returnest to the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou (art), and to dust shalt thou return."

1. We are not to regard these, any more than the words

addressed to Eve, as at all giving a full summary of the evils traceable to sin. Nor are we to forget that they point to the darker side of the earthly lot of Adam and his descendants. They, of course, presupposed all those varied blessings secured by the redemptive grace previously alluded to. We may say generally, that they imply apparently the following:—*First*, that the main, if not the only, influence which led to the sin of Adam was that of Eve. He is said to have “hearkened to the voice of his wife.” Since the time here referred to, how vast and how truly innumerable have been the religious, moral, and social evils thus flowing from what is most precious and beautiful, relative affection of every form! Once perverted, or, allowed to rule instead of being constrained to serve, who can anticipate the result? Here Adam yielded to “the voice of his wife,” and so disobeyed the voice, the express and most solemn command of the Creator and God of both. Excuse was utterly vain. *Secondly*, as already hinted at, God here speaks as if the command had been specially given to Adam, or as if he bore the representative character and sustained the peculiar responsibility indicated in the New Testament. *Thirdly*, the ground is declared to be cursed on his account, or specially because of this first transgression. It would not possess the rich productiveness of the garden. It would be overrun with “thorns and thistles” and with many a noxious weed where the most needful crops ought to grow. The meanest food would often have to suffice,—“Thou shalt eat the herb of the field.” *Fourthly*, human life would not be without the curse of toil and perplexity and sorrow: “in the sweat of thy face,” and “in sorrow” of heart, “shalt thou eat bread.” *Fifthly*, the human family must submit, like all surrounding creatures, to a law of “vanity,” the law of universal mortality, “till thou returnest to the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou (art), and to dust shalt thou return.” *Sixthly*, not only are we to regard these evils as mingled with the manifold mercies of the gracious economy, but as being destined to be very

greatly modified, and to a greater or less extent removed through the redemptive renewal of individual and social life on earth. We may touch on this again, as we go on to make the following remarks :—

2. What are we to understand by the curse here said to fall upon the very ground? We may refer to two sources of evil. *First*, here, as everywhere, sin would to no small extent be its own punishment or become the parent of its own curse. It would affect the character and conduct of the whole race. Infinite disorder would follow. We must leave to imagination to trace the fearful consequences of human degradation, of tribal and national wars, of prevented or neglected cultivation, of the unequal distribution of necessary food, and of many another tremendous evil, all tending to create and to retain the curse alluded to. *Secondly*, when treating of the goodness of the completed works of God, we were led to deal to some extent with this very subject. We then observed that the Divine words used of necessity implied no more than that all things were “very good,” or perfect in the sense of being perfectly adapted to their several ends, and that, so far as this world was concerned, however well prepared for its purpose, it need not be supposed to have been, at the time alluded to, fitted throughout, just as well as the garden of Eden, to be the happy abode of a holy or innocent race, a race, in fact, never destined to inhabit it. We, therefore, concluded, that only the garden was thus Divinely and perfectly prepared. We inferred that we had no right to assume that the sacred author at all meant to suggest that God had created a universal paradise, and then, because of the first sin, reduced the whole to a state of at least partial ruin by way of executing the curse here pronounced. Just as all believe that in the full foreknowledge of the fall a fit Saviour was provided, “before the foundation of the world;” so, in the same unerring foreknowledge, we may view the earth as prepared to be the suitable abode of a

fallen yet redeemed race, and therefore not raised to a state of preparation for the reception of a race of perfectly holy beings.

When, accordingly, God spoke of the ground being cursed, we seem to be fairly allowed to conclude that He meant virtually or relatively cursed, that is to say, that man would find it to be in such a state as would have been that of the garden if a positive curse had fallen upon it. Had the human family continued upright the earth would have been prepared to form a perfectly suitable abode. With increasing numbers there would have been progressive preparation. The first transgression suspended this law of normal physical improvement. Such suspension to all intents amounted to the curse pronounced. To what we have already said, we need hardly add, that this curse was not intended to remain in unmitigated degree to the end of time. Only, indeed, in the restored and heavenly paradise need we anticipate the final and absolute removal of this mighty evil. Still, under the full influence of the redemptive system we cannot predict to how great an extent its removal may be secured. Already, in many regions how much has been effected. How different the results of good and of bad political government ! At this hour the varied condition of nations more or less Christian affords a perfect illustration of the effect of the Divine elevation of human character on the very surface of the earth. As all nations experience the power of individual and social regeneration, "the earth shall yield her increase," and the curse be forgotten amidst the blessings of universal abundance.

3. We shall make no special reference to the toils and perplexities and sorrows of human life. All history is full of their endlessly diversified recital. "The whole creation groaneth"; yet not without mitigation, nor without hope. Even now, what a contrast between Christian homes and countries and those unblessed by that Divine and gracious Power to which this opening portion of Scripture so expressly and so truly refers !

4. But what of the law of universal mortality? It would require a more extended consideration than we can well afford to give it here. We may submit the following :—

(a.) We have already said that we have no reason to suppose that the human frame was, by original constitution, immortal or incapable of natural decay and dissolution. What Paul says of “flesh and blood” being unfit for the life of the eternal kingdom seems applicable to the body of Adam as truly, though not so palpably, as to that of any of his descendants. This consists with the fact that death was the threatened penalty of the Paradisaic Law, as God could easily ward off death or translate to a higher sphere without death, on the supposition of continued uprightness. Thus we may be said to find here an illustration of the view taken of the curse pronounced on the ground. Man was not originally constituted immortal, but simply assured of immortality. This immortality he forfeited. The law of nature was thus allowed to take its course, doubtless rendered the more potent or the more speedily effective in consequence of the introduction and progressive development of sin. In this way, as Paul affirms, “sin entered the world, and death by sin,” not because God actually or positively changed a naturally immortal into a naturally mortal being, but because He did not please to check the created tendency to decay or to raise the naturally mortal into a Divinely appointed and sustained, if not a naturally constituted, immortal creature. The curse, then, which fell upon the human body, like that pronounced on the soil, was rather negative than positive, the result of Divine non-interference with nature in both cases,—in the one, to raise the world progressively into a state of fitness for the habitation of an increasing sinless race ; in the other to raise mankind above the reach of that essential weakness of “flesh and blood,” or of that tendency to decay native to all material organization, which, apart from Divine interference, could not fail to issue in dissolution.

(b.) We must carefully avoid the grave error, often committed,

of identifying the death here spoken of with the death threatened as the penalty of the Paradisaic Law. Of this matter we have elsewhere treated pretty fully already. Whatever its real amount, that penalty assuredly involved vastly more than the purely natural death here intended. The latter, in fact, is to be regarded as simply a portion of what we have been calling the severer part of the Divine treatment of Adam, and of course of his race, viewed as placed under the Economy of Redemption, and as Divinely intended practically to indicate or declare that they were *under sin*, just as the more merciful and benevolent part of that treatment is intended and fitted to declare that they are at the same time *under grace*.

Accordingly, this death, as well as the other evils just alluded to, must be viewed in reality as part of the new order or constitution of things in which they were placed in order to their eternal salvation. Undoubtedly, unless Adam had sinned, and justly deserved the penalty referred to, this death would never have been appointed. To say this, however, is very far from an admission of their identity. The retention of the death previously threatened would have prevented the possibility of salvation. The appointment of the death here implied consists with the full enjoyment of salvation, nay, is overruled for the advancement of the eternal well-being of the saved: "All things are yours; . . . whether life *or death*."

In Rom. v. 12-21 the reasoning of the Apostle Paul may seem most decidedly to conflict with the above. We are persuaded however, that in so far as he refers to the death here spoken of as due to the one sin of Adam, he intends no more than natural death, and that viewed as expressive of the fact, that "by one man's disobedience many were made or constituted sinners," or that all men are Divinely treated as under sin. As the apostle in this important and most difficult passage does not allude to the first transgression alone, but speaks also of the many sins or offences of mankind, we need not wonder to find the word death used in more than one sense. Hence

one source of difficulty in tracing his exact meaning. Hence, too, we think, he appears to say what is hardly consistent with the above. However, we need not have any doubt of his meaning in verse 12, where he says, "as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin." We may be perfectly assured that whatever they may at first suggest, his words cannot refer to the full penalty or real "wages of sin," as he immediately adds that "that death has passed upon all," saint as well as sinner, the saved as well as the unsaved, and therefore can be no more than natural death, the Divinely appointed *note or mark of sin*, or, as we have again and again said, that part of the Divine treatment which practically declares that, though under grace, all men are also under sin.

5. Such, then, was the transition from the Paradisaic to the present or Redemptive Order or Constitution of things. We need not say, that, though here only most obscurely hinted at, the real basis or foundation of the latter was laid in the future Great Propitiation of that promised "Seed of the woman," who was to "bruise or crush the head of the serpent." He, we need not add, is the real and glorious Head of the Redemptive System. The whole course of Providence, from first to last, and throughout the entire world, is one of Divine mercy and grace toward mankind. Through that Gracious and Merciful Providence, the great Author of it as well as of the Scheme of Salvation may well be regarded as silently, yet clearly, proclaiming His Gospel in every land ; so the sublime and infallible words of Jesus seem to imply,—“Love your enemies : . . . that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven ; for He maketh His sun to arise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.”

Thus Jesus clearly teaches that Universal Divine Providence reveals Universal Divine Love, the very love which He counsels His disciples to display towards enemies as well as friends. But, if God thus reveals His love or His goodness to mankind

at large, we may ask, For what purpose? Doubtless, that that goodness might lead all men to repentance, and thus to salvation. Providence, then, is at once based upon the great Propitiation, and, in spirit and design, in perfect harmony with it. In fact, we find a key in the words under consideration to the nature and end of that providence. We may illustrate what we mean thus. Wherever we look, we seem to find a law of harmony between the constitution or character of living beings and their external condition or the circumstances with which they are surrounded. So it must be in the case of all irrational and irresponsible creatures. In order to their happy existence, their circumstances must and actually do correspond with their constitution. So it is found everywhere at the present day, and so it is believed to have ever been in the past history of the globe. The Geologist, accordingly, feels perfectly warranted in inferring with certainty the circumstances, or the nature of the habitat, from the constitution which the fossil remains of any extinct species, more or less ancient, may clearly indicate. Such, then, is a law of nature, the law of harmony between the circumstances and constitution of living creatures. So, a like law seems to obtain in the moral universe, as we find it revealed by Scripture rather than discovered by science. Here, character must be kept in view, and not mere constitution. In heaven, we are informed, perfect happiness corresponds with perfect holiness. In hell, misery is in keeping with sin. In paradise, as we have been contemplating, all circumstances contributed to happiness so long as sinless character was maintained. In this world, or under the present order of things, we find evil and good wonderfully intermingled,—the evil indicating one thing, the good indicating another; the former pointing to the one fact to which we have been alluding, the fact that all are under sin, the latter pointing to the other fact which we have been treating as alike real, the fact that all are under grace. Thus may we perceive the perfect harmony between the Providence

of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ,—between the character and circumstances of mankind on the one hand, and the Scripture history of the Fall and of Redemption on the other.

6. We have been treating the words before us as applying as much to the race as to the parents of mankind. We are here provided with a double reason for so doing. In the first place, the Divine allusion to “the Seed of the woman,” whether taken personally or collectively, brings before us the posterity as well as the parents; and, in the second place, the same thing is done by the Divine words addressed to Eve on the one hand, and to Adam on the other. In this way, and in keeping with the clear statements of New Testament Scripture, God appears undoubtedly to proceed on the principle, not only of the personal responsibility, but also of the representative character of Adam. How far that character extended we cannot here consider. Just as really as himself, we find his whole family, the entire human race, placed precisely in the circumstances in which he was placed, and which, as we have been so fully bringing out, indicate the two grand facts of their being under sin on the one hand, and under grace on the other. His one sin assuredly led to this, that they were all born and placed in circumstances precisely the same as his, that is, clearly indicative of the two important facts just alluded to. Why born out of paradise and under the law of death? Because under sin. Why living in a world of manifold blessing? Because under grace. What was true of the parents, then, is true of all their posterity.

We cannot, then, if we would, set aside the representative character of the first man. We may safely say, that Scripture as a whole proceeds upon it. We may as truly say, that the system of providence has been reared in harmony with it. We need not add, that certain parts of the writings of Paul expressly treat of it. However involved in obscurity, we may be assured that we cannot free ourselves from mental diffi-

culty or perplexity by denying it, or by setting it aside. It has certainly a large, a prominent, a real place in Scripture. Whilst Scripture remains, the First Adam will continue to stand in undeniable, if mysterious, relationship to the Second. How much is involved in the brief saying of Paul,—“Adam who is the figure or the type of Him that was to come”!

7. Much has been said and written against the view of the character just ascribed to the First man, the Father of mankind. It may be fairly confessed, that what is usually called the doctrine of Original Sin has not unfrequently been presented in a form by no means fitted to commend it to very many really thoughtful minds. That all the difficulties connected with this and other doctrines of Scripture can be removed in a way satisfactory to all is more than can well be expected. We must leave a broad margin for those “secret things which belong to God,” and the full comprehension of which may, at least in this world, ever lie beyond our reach. All that we can, in some cases, wisely aim to accomplish, is to remove misconceptions on the one hand, and to guard against adding theoretical errors to the simple and practical interpretation of those portions of Scripture which may be confessedly “hard to be understood,” on the other.

We need not say that various theories have been developed and more or less widely maintained with respect to the important doctrine in question. Whilst by some it has been simply explained away, by others it has been presented in a very forbidding form. It may be well to consider it in the light of the facts which have just been engaging our attention. We have been led to regard the first transgression as immediately judged, condemned, and dealt with by the Divine Judge and King. As we were led to conclude, the Day of Judgment of the Paradisaic World, or of man viewed as Divinely placed under the Paradisaic constitution or law, is to be regarded as past, and that for ever. Instead of executing the righteous

sentence, the Divine Father, King, and Judge was pleased to put the Transgressor under a New Law or Constitution of Saving or Redemptive Grace. With a full pardon or a free salvation presented to him, if Adam accepted and acted accordingly, he would escape all the evils of sin, and never again come into a state of condemnation. If he refused the precious gift, and thus persisted in a course of sin, he would assuredly and most justly suffer the fearful consequence. In this case, his sins, that of rejecting forgiveness and that of persistent rebellion against the God as well of grace and mercy as of righteousness and truth, would be judged and dealt with as committed against the Law of the New Economy. He would not now be condemned anew for his first sin, but he would be condemned for refusing the pardon of it, or for persistently retaining it through continued impenitence, as also for all his manifold violation of the law of that new economy.

Under this gracious system, the penalty of final rebellion must be peculiarly and terribly severe, we need not say, for the simple reason, that no sin can possibly be greater than the sin of the continued and final rejection of Divine mercy and eternal salvation. This is the sin or rather the sum of all the sins for which all those who die in impenitence will be judged and condemned under the Redemptive system.

Let us apply this principle to the case of the posterity of Adam viewed as placed under that system. If they accept the free gift of eternal life, they can finally suffer for no sin of their own and for no sin of Adam. If they persistently reject that precious boon, they will be judged and condemned accordingly. If Adam is not to be judged a second time for his first sin, and if his posterity, like himself, are to be treated, as they undoubtedly shall be, solely according to the Law of the Redemptive Economy, they can be judged, and acquitted or condemned, on the ground of obedience or disobedience to that law alone; that is to say, not in relation to the Paradisaic Law and the ancestral violation of it, but according as they have finally accepted or

rejected the great and free salvation in order to their enjoyment of which they were graciously placed under that Economy.

This is in perfect harmony with the whole current and scope of Scripture. In the great Day of Judgment we are expressly informed, sentence will be passed on "the deeds done in the body," on all the acts, good or bad, of all the children of men. Beyond these we have no reference, we have not so much as a single hint, in any part of the sacred volume. We repeat, then, the Paradisaic Period has had its Day of Judgment, in which the transactions from beginning to end have been fully and finally dealt with by the Divine Father and Judge of primitive man, and at some unknown future time the Redemptive Period shall have its Day of Judgment, in which the transactions from beginning to end shall be fully and finally dealt with by the Divine Saviour and Judge of the human race.

In this way we seem led to the conclusion, that, whatever view we may take of the doctrine in question, or whatever idea we attach to such words as these,—“As by one man's disobedience many were made or constituted sinners,”—seeing that, for that act of disobedience they shall never, in the Great Future be judged, far less condemned, there can be no real practical difficulty involved in the true teachings of Scripture, whether rightly understood or not. These teachings, instead of being justly regarded as harsh and intolerably severe with respect to the whole family of Adam, especially to certain of those who die in infancy, and of whose salvation more than doubts have been entertained, may rather be most favourably received and joyfully contemplated as the very opposite, suggestive as they are of the assured well-being of all, who have been, by their very birth into the family of Adam, Divinely placed under a Law of Sovereign and Saving Grace, and who, never having had the ability or the opportunity to obey or disobey it, cannot be condemned for the rejection of the gift of that grace, and therefore, as thus guiltless with respect to the

only law by which they can be judged, must be treated as the rightful possessors of that precious gift of God, which, as much as any of His other "gifts," may be regarded as "without repentance." Our minds, accordingly, may thus rise to "the full assurance of hope" with respect to the safety of all who are removed from this world before they have reached the period of real and personal responsibility, or, as we may express it, before they have risen out of the state of moral infancy, a state which may, in many cases, be of comparatively long continuance, and out of which, through want of adequate powers or needful opportunities, multitudes of the species may be justly said never to rise.

As to all others, those who yield to the Law of Grace shall not in the end be disappointed, whilst those who refuse and rebel cannot complain of the terrible issue. We may just add, that, though thus aiming to remove certain difficulties and objections, we are very far from thinking the special subject alluded by any means easily or even at all comprehensible, or from regarding such questions as that pertaining to the responsibility of the heathen and the like as really capable of any satisfactory solution by the mind of man. We believe that there is but one way by which we can arrive at any measure of real substantial satisfaction with respect to the vast masses of mankind; and that is, by trustfully leaving their judgment and destiny in the hand of Him who cannot but do rightly, and who, we may be perfectly assured, possesses infinitely more compassion towards them than it is possible for us or for any created being to entertain.

8. So much for the point in hand, the relative bearings of the First Transgression. However, there is another point closely connected, which we cannot well overlook. We refer to that moral and spiritual depravity which immediately followed that sin, nay, which was so far implied in the very act of committing it, and which the sacred Scriptures seem

everywhere, implicitly or explicitly, to treat as hereditary and universal,—that depravity in fact, to which many attach the name we have been otherwise using, of original sin. We need hardly say, that such depravity has been decidedly denied by many; we feel assured, however, without reason. We believe the testimony of Scripture to be clear on the one hand, and to be in perfect harmony with the testimony of universal experience on the other. Let us deal then with the terrible fact as a stern reality, and therefore a real difficulty, at least in the judgment of very many.

Thus entering the world in a state of spiritual deterioration and moral weakness and depravity, are the children of Adam to be considered, however sinful their career, as worthy rather of commiseration than of condemnation? Must their lot be deemed hard and unreasonably severe? Now, before this question can be fairly or intelligently answered, we must ask another, namely, What is really and Divinely required of them? Does God demand of them, though beginning life in such a morally enfeebled condition, and that by no will or act of their own, all that perfect obedience which He required of their first parents as they came in a state of perfection from His creative hand, with a fearful penalty annexed to the very first act of sin? If so, there would be no lack of reason for just complaint. But what does He really demand of them? Why, to do the very thing which they deeply need; or, rather, to yield themselves up to Him that He may do that very thing for them. Are they spiritually and morally diseased? He has converted this world into a vast hospital. He has supplied a Physician "who never lost a patient," and He simply commands them to submit to be perfectly cured. Are they spiritually and morally helpless and enslaved? He has placed them under that great and all-powerful Redemptive System to which we have been referring, and through the aid of which He assures them of fully restored strength and finally completed emancipation.

Let us, however, suppose the case of some one, who thinks he is not without cause of complaint, or who may deem his lot somewhat severe. He complains of the hardship of contending with the depravity which he inherits and the temptations with which he is ever assailed. Justice, he ventures to insinuate, required that he should have begun life in a state of moral wholeness or perfection, and been permitted to act for himself according to the law of purely personal obligation. What then? Why, we answer, that we cannot agree with him in opinion or envy him of his choice. Experience, we suspect, would soon end in demonstrating his folly. If his supposed wish were granted, what would directly follow? He would find a whole course of life with its difficulties and temptations stretching out before his view. He would perceive, that, by any one moral failure he might at any time be constituted a sinner and be dealt with accordingly. He would further perceive, that, by his choice he set aside the prospect of the exercise of mercy in his behalf. As he carefully and humbly reflected, he would doubtless come to the wise conclusion, that far more desirable is the lot of those, who, however spiritually and morally injured or depraved, are placed under such an all-sufficient remedial system as makes ample provision for the pardon of all actual sins on the one hand, and for the renewal of the whole man, spiritual and moral, nay, intellectual and physical, on the other.

In this way, and however we may reason or object, whatever the theoretical difficulties connected with the Scripture statements, whether with respect to the first sin or to the moral condition of mankind, we may safely and truly say, that there exist no real practical difficulties at all warranting the slightest reasonable complaint. In fact, we may feel fully assured, that, the more comprehensively we are enabled to view the mighty twofold and closely related system of human Creation and Redemption, the more closely shall we see its consistency with perfect righteousness, goodness, and wisdom. Our present

most limited knowledge may well combine with our faith in its Divine Author to assure us, that, if we understood the real nature and manifold design of that mysterious part of it to which so many object,—we mean that pertaining to the relationship of the First to the Second Adam, and of both to mankind,—we could not fail to be persuaded, not only that it could be contrived by the Divine Mind alone, but also that, when finally completed, it will, as the Apocalypse so sublimely sets forth, be seen to be the very highest work of God, and thus become the source of universal as well as eternal adoration and praise.

VI.

“And Adam called his wife’s name Eve: because she was the mother of all living. And Jehovah God made to Adam and his wife garments of skins, and clothed them.”

1. “And Adam called,” etc. This may seem to have been more fitly introduced after the record of the first birth, or after Eve became a mother. We may here repeat what we have had frequent cause for stating, that we must not lay very great stress on the mere order of so brief a narrative. This significant name, Havvah, Eve, Life, may indeed have been thus early given, and may have been suggested by the words of God, both with respect to “the Seed of the woman,” to the maternal sorrows and sufferings of the sex, and to the race destined to spring from her. She was thus the created fountain whence the whole stream of human life was to flow. At the same time, we may justly suppose an express allusion to the promise of a Deliverer from sin and death or of the great Restorer of life to mankind. Thus, as some believe, we have an early and a practical expression of the faith of the first Father of mankind.

2. “And Jehovah God made to Adam and his wife gar-

ments of skins, and clothed them." We need not take these words in all their literal force. In Scripture God is often spoken of as if directly doing what He simply leads men to do for themselves. He suggests the idea, and gives the will and power to realise it. Thus, "except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." It has often been maintained that this statement may be viewed, if not as a full proof, at least as a tolerably decisive indication, of the immediate institution of animal sacrifices. It is argued that, as no animals were then used for human food, and as they can hardly be supposed to have been killed for the sole purpose here alluded to, the idea of such sacrifices is most natural, especially as we know that they formed a most suitable symbolic part of the new economy, and that they were at least of the very earliest institution. We need hardly say that the force of this argument is not affected by the view taken of the primitive law with respect to human food, as, understand that law as we may, we may fairly suppose that animal food was at least by no means so early used.

We have always thought that the strongest reason for inferring as well the very early as the really Divine institution of the sacrifices referred to is to be found in the New Testament affirmation that "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain," which, whatever the full meaning, would appear certainly to imply that Abel acted according to the Divine testimony, and therefore in keeping with the previous Divine appointment of a definite mode of worship. Be the argument from the words before us what it may, we may at least suppose that very early instructions would be given to Adam with regard to those appropriate and most expressive symbolic rites. We can hardly point to a more suitable time for their institution than when sin had been committed, and when the need of so fit a mode of worship could not but exist. The full import of such sacrifices could not, even with all the Divine instruction which they may have received, be really

known to Adam or to Abel. To their minds, they would appear appropriate symbols of the most important truth, if not intelligently regarded as most expressive types of the great Suffering Saviour who was yet to come.

3. We might here have treated this striking statement in relation to the condition of primitive mankind. We might have treated also of certain mistaken notices which are now afloat with regard to that condition. It was certainly neither savage nor civilised, as these words are usually understood. However, we would do no more than thus merely allude to a subject of much interest, yet requiring, if dealt with at all, very much more than a brief consideration. We may merely say, that the first citizens of the world, however destitute of the manifold and highly useful results of human art and refinement, and however simple in their modes of life and of intercommunion, may, through the remains of their original excellence, as well as through the continued teachings of the blessed God, have been very far removed from any state at all like that of savage or barbarous life; and yet, doubtless, wherever sin and crime more rapidly and injuriously advanced, men must have soon sunk into a most barbarous or savage state.

VII.

“And Jehovah God said, Behold, the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat, and live for ever; therefore Jehovah God sent him out of the garden of Eden, to till the ground whence he was taken. And He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of the sword which turned itself (continually) to keep the way of the Tree of Life.”

1. We have now come to treat of the closing paragraph of this most appropriate, this unspeakably precious, Introduction to the Volume of Inspiration. That paragraph appears at once

to form the fit conclusion of the narrative of the first or Paradisaical Dispensation, and to be the like fit beginning of the history of the second or Redemptive Dispensation, which then began and which will continue to the end of time. The real and precious foundation of this gracious economy was truly, however obscurely, set forth in that first promise of a Great Deliverer, which forms the sum and source of all subsequent promises and revealings of Divine mercy and grace towards fallen man. The paragraph before us shows how God was pleased to bring the transactions of the garden home of Adam and Eve to a complete and final termination, by removing them from the once happy as well as sacred enclosure, and by placing a watchful and powerful guard at an appointed spot to prevent all re-entrance and all future use of the symbolic Tree of Life. We shall find in this very Cherubic ministry, seemingly of Divine severity alone, the most pleasing manifestation of the Divine presence and mercy, and a most gracious and comforting provision of the tenderly compassionate Father for the conversion of the new and otherwise cheerless abode of, we may suppose, His now penitent Children, into a sweet and sacred temple of worship and praise.

2. "And Jehovah God said, Behold, the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil." On this we may submit the following :

(a.) Adam and Eve may have remained some time in the garden ; or we may take the word to refer to what immediately followed the Divine appearance and communication just considered. We rather incline to the former view. That appearance seems to have taken place at even-tide. Nor need we suppose haste, in any sense, to have distinguished the execution of the severer part of the Divine communication. We prefer to think that some delay occurred, as if God would kindly linger in the fulfilment of an unpleasant work. Besides, not impossibly further and most needful instructions may have

been imparted, though it would seem more likely that Adam and Eve were left for a season to their own reflections.

(*b.*) This removal from the garden, though seemingly severe, was undoubtedly essential for their future welfare. The new order of things could not otherwise be well begun or established.

(*c.*) The words here used have, as we have already found, been supposed to imply that the man had really become like God, and have been used, along with those that follow, to prove that the trees were really endowed with mysterious virtues corresponding to their respective names. The Hebrew is certainly rightly translated, "the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil"; and might of course be supposed to convey some such literal meaning. However, such a meaning is utterly at variance with the whole scope of the narrative, not to speak of its inconsistency with either Scripture or common sense. Certain of the most judicious interpreters have supposed the use of a fine and dignified irony.

This view has been somewhat severely condemned by others as implying on the part of the Divine speaker a harshness and severity of spirit not for a moment to be attributed to Him who had revealed so much compassion and mercy towards the fallen. However, we think this censure just only on the mistaken supposition that irony always implies at least some degree of harshness and severity. However, there may be an irony of the heart, an irony of disappointed or wounded affection, an irony expressive of the most pungent grief and sorrow. Thus a devoted father may warn his son of the danger of seeking to rise in some particular way, say, to become rich by some dishonourable means. Suppose the warning disregarded, and the youth seemingly to succeed, but afterwards to be detected and punished for his crime; might not the father say to himself, Ah, behold, my son has become rich! or, as with broken heart he thought of the imprisoned lad, might he not exclaim, There now! how rich, how great

has he made himself! So here. Those who reject this view seem to forget that the words are not said to have been addressed to Adam, but are simply expressive of the mind of God.

(d.) Underlying this interpretation is, we think, the real idea here intended, however difficult it may seem to show its consistency with the form of the expression; we mean the idea of an aim or an endeavour, and that of course vain and delusive, to rise, as the tempter suggested, in some sense, to a level with God. This will appear evident if we make proper use of the following clause in order to the correct interpretation of this. When it is said, "lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever," we must suppose that it is meant, either that the man by so eating would actually secure to himself immortal life, or that he would thus again deceive himself and delusively believe that he would escape the threatened death or live for ever. If the former, then both clauses are to be taken most literally, and we are to understand in the one case that man had actually risen, and that the words of the tempter were actually true; and in the other case, that even after his fall and after hearing the Divine communication, he would, in the judgment of God Himself, by eating of the tree of life, actually escape death and live for ever. We need not say that such a view is not only extravagant, but also absolutely absurd. It makes Satan speak the truth in the denial of the truth of God, and it makes God contradict Himself in His recent announcement of the death of Adam. All is simple and of very important meaning, if we regard the word as referring to the possible aim or intention of Adam and its pernicious consequence to himself, and thus as amounting to this, "lest he take and eat of the tree of life, in order that he may thus escape death and live for ever"; the real and main idea being, that Adam might be led delusively to use the fruit of this tree as he had been led delusively to use that of the other. By so doing, his mind

would be thoroughly deceived on the one hand, and turned away from the only true source of hope, the only real Tree of Life to fallen man, the precious Promise of a future Redeemer. Thus the words of God are at once appropriate and full of Paternal love and care.

He would thus exclude Adam from the garden to prevent a second instance of suicidal self-deception. By eating of the one tree he had lost the eternal life guaranteed by the law of the original or Paradisaic Economy; he had been deceived, and had utterly failed. By eating of the other tree, he might again, as we have said, deceive himself, neglect the true source of hope, and thus lose the eternal life promised in connection with the new or Redemptive Economy. If such, however, be the meaning and design of this second clause, the import of that under consideration must be in keeping with it; that is, it must refer, not to any real Divine likeness, but to the delusive aim or attempt to rise towards it. This is the more evident, as the very form of the Divine words connects them directly with the words used by the deceiver in his temptation of Eve: "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, or as God, knowing good and evil." The words before us so exactly correspond with these, that we cannot but suppose a direct reference, and, therefore, an apparent yet impossible admission, or rather affirmation, on the part of God, that the tempter had spoken the truth.

The only way to escape this conclusion is, simply that of regarding God, whether ironically or otherwise, as saying that the man had risen as the tempter proposed, had become like God according to the devil's suggestion, or after the devil's way, not really, therefore, but delusively, not to his advancement, but to his ruin. By keeping this reference to the words of the temptation in view, we can perceive and account for the seemingly express statement of fact, when, as we have said, no more than delusive aim or intention can possibly be

meant. Such, then, we take the real idea to be. However, we repeat that the idea, of such irony as we have above suggested may, if needful, be fully maintained as vastly superior to the absurdly literal meaning which has been attached to the words.

3. "And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat, and live for ever." We have just given what we deem the real force and design of these words. Man had been deceived, and had taken Satan's delusive way of rising to a likeness to God in the knowledge of good and evil. His delusive attempt had been his destruction. He acted as if the material tree could secure spiritual good. He may be deceived again; he may delusively trust in the supposed virtues of the other tree; he may neglect, through a new self-deception, the only means of recovery. Hence the Divine motive for the proposed act of exclusion. How absurd the idea that God designed thus to prevent Adam from escaping the death to which he had been doomed, and thus from frustrating the purpose or decree of God by eating of the fruit of any material tree!

4. "Therefore Jehovah God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground whence he was taken." We have just indicated the design of this Divine act. The words would seem to imply that Adam was created in a region outside his original abode. They would also suggest the idea that the future employment of Adam was that afterwards followed by his eldest son Cain.

5. "And He drove out the man." This is apt to suggest the idea of violence. We may rather suppose, however, a simple and suitable manifestation of that dignified authority with which a judicial act could not fail to be done.

6. "And He placed at the east of the garden of Eden the cherubim, and the flame of the sword which turned itself

(continually) to keep the way of the tree of life." Here we may observe :

(a.) From what we have been led to regard as the Divine purpose in excluding Adam and Eve from the garden, we are at no loss to understand the design of this cherubic guard,—“to keep the way of the tree of life”; in fact, to prevent the use, or rather the misuse of its fruit. As the real good of the excluded was intended, we cannot regard these Cherubim, whatever we consider them, as exclusively ministers of judgment, but must gladly recognise in them also the graciously appointed ministers of mercy. They rendered the tree of life inaccessible, as now of no possible avail, that the true source of eternal life might not be forsaken. Let it, then, be clearly observed, that the Divine purpose was twofold. *First*, to prevent the mistaken and delusive use of the tree of life; and, *secondly*, to direct to the only real foundation of hope for the fallen ones.

(b.) These Cherubim are said to have been placed at the east of the garden of Eden. This would seem to imply that Adam and Eve had been directed by God to the eastward; and we may infer that they were thus guided to the place most suitable for their future abode. They must have remained near the garden, else there would have been no need to guard that from which they had removed to a distance.

(c.) But why thus guard the symbolic tree at all? Having served its purpose, might it not now be destroyed? Doubtless, like the garden, it at last disappeared. Still, we may suppose a not unlikely reason for the preservation of both; we mean, that they might, for some considerable time at least, continue to make a salutary impression with respect to the First Economy and what was lost by sin, as well as to inspire sincere interest in the New Economy and what was promised to repentance.

(d.) The view above taken of the double purpose of God, judicial and merciful, is fully supported by the name here

given to the appointed guard,—The Cherubim. We have no doubt the definite article is here used designedly to point the reader to the well-known Cherubim. Calvin appears to have well remarked that the sacred author seems to have been led to use the name, which would not be used at the time referred to, but which was appropriate in itself and familiar to the minds of those for whose instruction he more immediately wrote. We simply note this. We think it important in relation to correct interpretation. The name at once suggests the Cherubim of the tabernacle and temple, and of the visions of the prophet Ezekiel, together with the Seraphim of Isaiah and the Living-ones of the Apocalypse. All these, however differing in name and descriptive form, appear to represent the same, or, at least, kindred objects, whatever these may be. At present we allude especially to the tabernacle as clearly suggestive of the idea that the Cherubim are to be associated with the grand work of human Redemption. Whatever agency they symbolized, that of angels or of the powers of nature, or of both combined, they were emphatically representative of the ministry of mercy. Still, the most terrible of all kinds of judgment may be needful in order to the very reign of mercy, and, therefore, as at first sight here, they may seem to be mere ministers of judgment. The fact, however, that the Divine purpose was essentially merciful on the one hand, and that their office is essentially merciful also on the other, clearly proves that they were here placed in peculiarly merciful relationship to those for whom God was now providing a new home, and, at the same time, opening up a new way of access to Himself; in a word, by this special arrangement God appears evidently to indicate His own nearness to these seemingly banished ones. Here we shall say no more on this point, but return to it when we have inquired so far, at least, as to what these Cherubim ought to be thought to represent.

(c.) After all that has been written on this subject in more recent times, and however greatly other views have com-

mended themselves to not a few, we cannot but regard that view which was once most prevalent as the true one, nay, as the only one which is in keeping with all parts of Scripture; we refer to that which, whilst not excluding the idea of Divine Providence, supposes a symbolic representation of angelic beings, or of the holy or unfallen moral universe. As already remarked, we suppose the ordinary idea correct, according to which the "Living-ones" of the Apocalypse, no less than the Seraphim of Isaiah, may be in a general way identified with the Cherubim.

We make this observation, that we may at once consider what we deem the very strongest argument against the view which we deem scriptural. In Rev. v. 8-10, we are told: "And when He had taken the book, the four Living-ones and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints; and they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." Taken as they stand, these words would appear clearly to imply that these Living-ones must in some way be, as well as the Elders, representative of the Redeemed; and so, accordingly, some have maintained. However, we need hardly say that the received Greek text is not regarded as by any means certainly correct in this place. For the first "us,"—"Thou hast redeemed *us*,"—we have no sufficient authority. Instead of the second "us,"—"and hast made *us* unto our God,"—we may substitute "them"; and for the "we" which follows,—"*we* shall reign,"—we may substitute "they"; and thus translate, with Alford: "For Thou wert slain, and didst redeem to God through Thy blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and madest them a kingdom and priests, and they

reign upon the earth." On this we may observe that the critical alteration, though by no means made in the interest of any theory, seems to harmonize exactly with the song especially considered as that of the very few by whom it was sung, referring, as it does, to the vast multitude of every age and country redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, or to those whose prayers were there presented, as symbolized by the vials.

However, be this as it may, the simple fact that the received text is doubtful, and that the above change may be justly made, sets aside the whole argument in favour of the idea that these Living-ones, and therefore the Cherubim, in some way represent, not the Angelic, but the Redeemed world. However, even taking the English version as it is, and thus giving the argument all the force which it can thence derive, we cannot by any means admit that it is yet decisive.

Supposing we have evidence in support of our view of the subject, and are thus led to regard the words in question in the light of an objection, we think we need be at no loss for a principle of just interpretation by which that objection may be removed. Though these Living-ones are associated in this act of worship with the Elders, it does not follow that both must be for certain regarded as taking part in the whole. Though all fell down and worshipped the Lamb, all may not have had harps, or golden vials, with odours representing the prayers of saints, nor may all have sung what is assuredly the Song of the Redeemed alone. If we suppose the use of a simple zeugma, then we have no more than an instance of partial but not complete union. As these mysterious beings were so far of mere animal form, we may give an illustration which may the more clearly express our meaning. In Jonah iii. 8 we have these words : "Let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God ; yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands." Now here, precisely as in the passage in question, the first

clause is certainly applicable to both man and beast—both could be covered with sackcloth ; but all that follows, though apparently referring to both, cannot possibly be applied to any but man. In like manner, the first clause of our passage includes both Living-ones and Elders, but all the rest of the words may be applicable to the Elders alone. We have entered the more fully into this, because we think the argument based upon this passage is in reality the only one of any great force to be found in any part of Scripture against the view above given.

(*f.*) To attempt to state the various arguments in favour of that view would require far more space than we can afford. Our remaining remarks will proceed on the assumption of its correctness,—an assumption which will, at least, enable us to see how God was pleased to reveal the greatness of His interest in those just placed under a new order of things. They had fallen into sin and misery through the agency of an evil spirit, a fallen angel. They were taught to look on him as an enemy. But, have they, among beings of higher power than their own, only enemies? Have they no such mighty friends? Has God Himself foes, but no faithful servants? Does He permit evil beings to visit or inhabit the earth? and has He no good beings in this world, whom He can employ as messengers of love and mercy, or who may be helpful to those who may be weak and in special need? We do think, that the abode of primitive man, whether within or without the garden, would not seem complete or really what might be expected of the Lord of heaven as well as of earth, if permitted to be invaded by a terrible hostile power, and yet allowed to remain destitute of some friendly being or beings also excelling in strength. In the presence of these Cherubim, we see how God supplied the apparent want, and gave to man the help and comfort which he required.

(*g.*) But what of this “flaming sword”? Does it not seem to prove that these Cherubim were really hostile? Certainly

not. The flaming sword, which we take to mean a sword-like flame, could create terror only on the supposition of what doubtless was never even thought of; we mean, an attempt to re-enter the garden. As in the Cherubim we recognise the ministers of mercy, so, in this very flame, we can recognise a Symbol of the Presence of Him "who dwells between the Cherubim." Whilst at first the fierce flame would be an object of greatest awe, if not of terror, as time advanced, and as Divine communications multiplied, all at last would become a source of comfort and of hope. The once dreaded spot would become the place of special reverence and worship. With it would be associated the idea of what we read of, "the presence of the Lord," or of "Jehovah." It would thus, in fact, be their tabernacle or temple. In spirit, if not in words, they would doubtless treat it as a very Bethel, and often say, "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

(h.) Shall we regard these Cherubim as mere material symbols, set up in the place referred to as they were in the tabernacle? This seems to be the idea of some. We cannot by any means accept it. We think, in this case the angelic beings were real or living, just as the evil spirit, the tempter, was real and living. We are told that God placed them or caused them to dwell at the east of the garden. He did not place mere material or artificial and lifeless symbols at some narrow entrance into the garden. No; these Living-ones, to give them their Apocalyptic name, He caused to take up their abode, doubtless in the region to the east of the now forbidden spot. We are not told that they were constantly seen. For aught here stated, they may have been, usually at least, invisible. They might take care that the emblematic flame should continue to shine, or that it would appear as often as circumstances might require. We may presume that Adam and Eve were well aware of their presence, their sympathy, and their care. Here we may call to remembrance the

judicious thought of Calvin, that the sacred author gave them the familiar name of Cherubim, because they were the very beings represented by the cherubic symbols of the tabernacle.

(i.) We have said that this peculiarly sacred place seems to have become the place of earliest worship. The fact just hinted at, that, by the very name, the sacred writer suggested the presence chamber of the tabernacle and its sacred symbols, naturally suggests the idea that he himself had before his mind the thought of the presence and the worship of Jehovah. This inference is so far supported by his subsequent use of the expression, "the presence of Jehovah." Thus, when Cain departed from the abode of Adam, this very place we may presume, he is said to have "gone out from the presence of Jehovah." Before this time, Cain and Abel, we are told, brought their respective offerings to Jehovah, who rejected the one and accepted the other. This distinguishing procedure appears to have been open and evident to the brothers and to all present. We cannot well imagine a more likely method than that so often alluded to in subsequent Scripture, that of answering by fire on the one hand and of leaving untouched on the other. Sacrifices, doubtless, were appointed and offered by Adam before this date. We can conceive of no more appropriate place than that now considered.

In this way we seem brought to the most probable, if not to a certain, conclusion, that God was pleased to provide a fit home for the first human family, to deal with them kindly and graciously, in keeping with the merciful economy under which He had placed them, to give needful instructions as to the worship and service most suitable for them and most acceptable to Him, and to form them into a little community peculiarly precious to Himself, and intended to multiply into a numerous people "zealous of good works." He would not let them forget the Paradise which had been lost, but He would cheer and bless them in the wilderness, and lead them,

by His presence, by angel visits, by gracious promises, and by a worship in harmony with the thought of life through death, to cherish the strengthening as well as comforting hope of another, a richer, and a more enduring Paradise yet to be entered and enjoyed.

